



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2019

No. 77

## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable THOM TILLIS, a Senator from the State of North Carolina.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, the center of our joy, guide and bless our lawmakers. Inspire their minds; assist their wills; and strengthen their hands that they may not falter or fail. Do for them more than they can ask or imagine as You continue to use them as instruments for Your glory. Lord, give to all who labor in this Chamber the wisdom, humility, and competence sufficient for this day. May the words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts be acceptable to You, O God, our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, May 9, 2019.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable THOM TILLIS, a Sen-

ator from the State of North Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. TILLIS thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate has continued to make significant progress in the personnel business. After 2 years of systematic heel-dragging from our friends across the aisle, even on the least controversial nominations, the modest reform the Senate adopted last month is helping us to get back on track.

Another slate of capable nominees is now on its way to work for the American people. They are precisely the same sort of unobjectionable sub-Cabinet nominees who, until very recently, would have been subjected to 30 hours of debate. They would have tied up the floor for days before being confirmed anyway. They are perfect examples of why the Senate returned to our long-standing norms of processing lower level nominations. Now the American people are getting the government they elected at a more reasonable pace.

To be clear, the silly partisan games haven't all been cleared away from our work on nominations. For example, just yesterday, we confirmed Judge Joseph Bianco to serve on the Second Circuit by a relatively close vote of 54 to 42. Remember, for a judge, in the scope of Senate history, that counts as a close shave. So are we looking at a controversial person? Are we looking at an individual whom the Senators agonized over and painstakingly studied?

Judge Bianco brings a unanimous "well-qualified" rating from the ABA,

and he has already served as a judge for 13 years in the Eastern District of New York. Oh, by the way, he was confirmed to that position by a voice vote. In fact, back then in 2005, one of Mr. Bianco's most vocal supporters in the Senate was none other than our friend the Democratic leader. Here is how he praised his New Yorker to the Judiciary Committee in 2005.

Senator SCHUMER said: "I am proud to support someone as outstandingly qualified and well respected as Mr. Bianco."

Well, that was then and this is now.

The nominee is the same. Actually, he is not quite the same because now he has been a very highly regarded district judge for 13 years, so this nominee is actually even better. Yet the occupant of the White House is different. In this political moment, as we know, my Democratic colleagues' commitment to the "outrage industrial complex" seems to crowd out reasonable judgment.

So now, this week, the Democratic leader lumped the same individual he used to champion into what he described as "hard-right nominees." Then the Democratic leader and almost every other Member of his conference proceeded to vote against him. He voted against the same nominee he praised in such generous terms before.

I can only conclude that now the "outrage industrial complex" comes first, not the facts, not the nominee's qualifications. The "outrage industrial complex" comes first. The individual whom the Democratic leader used to champion and who passed by a voice vote in 2005 now receives this partisan treatment. What was once a routine matter for acclamation becomes a party-line vote just because this President is the one who nominated him.

Look, fortunately, at the end of the day, the outcome is the same. Judge Joseph Bianco, along with a slate of other well-qualified nominees, is now on the job, and the Republicans will

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S2751

continue our work to give the people the government they chose, the government they deserve.

### ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, as I mentioned, we are in the middle of a historic economic moment for the American people.

Last week, the nationwide unemployment rate fell to its lowest level since December of 1969. In just the year and a half since the Republicans passed comprehensive tax reform, 19 States have set new alltime lows in their unemployment rates, including in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

If you compare today to November 2016, there are now nearly 70 percent more job openings in durable goods manufacturing and more than twice as many job openings in construction. We are talking about hundreds of thousands of new job openings in these sectors alone.

Overall, under the Republicans' policies of the last 2 years, for the first time in recorded history, the number of job openings across the country has surpassed the number of Americans who are looking for work. Think about that. There is more than one job opening for every American who wants a job.

So this economic moment, helped along by Republican policies, has placed American workers in much higher demand, and we know what happens when American workers are in high demand—they get paid more. Sure enough, from late 2017 to late 2018, wage growth for U.S. workers logged its fastest full-year growth rate in a decade.

What is more, the New York Times reported:

The recent gains are going to those who need it most. Over the past year, low-wage workers have experienced the fastest pay increases, a shift from earlier in the recovery, when wage growth was concentrated at the top.

Of course, that phrase “earlier in the recovery” is code for during the Obama administration.

How often do we hear the left invoke the stale talking point that pro-growth policies only help wealthy people? Anyone who has cracked open a history book knows it is absurd to say that American free enterprise only helps wealthy people and that State-controlled socialism helps everyone else. Anyone who has picked up a newspaper in the last year and a half knows it as well.

Capitalism and free enterprise are the best tools humanity has ever discovered for lifting up the vulnerable and for empowering people. It was true in the 19th century; it was true in the 20th century; and it is still proving to be true in 2019.

It has been on the Republicans' watch that we have actually seen low-wage workers and nonmanagement workers receive the fastest wage

growth. It has been on the Republicans' watch that the unemployment rate specifically for Americans without high school diplomas has fallen to its lowest rate since 1992. It has been on the Republicans' watch that newspapers have described “a wave of disabled Americans” who have been able to join or return to the workforce.

My Republican colleagues and I could not be more proud of the conditions our policies have helped to create for all kinds of American workers and their families, and we will continue to defend these gains, to put pro-growth, pro-opportunity reforms in place, and to stand up against the far-left grab bag of socialist ideas that would threaten America's progress.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved. Morning business is closed.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Michael H. Park, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

#### ABORTION

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, a few weeks ago, I stood right here condemning Virginia Governor Ralph Northam's chilling remarks about infanticide. Since then, the American people have continued to witness disturbing abortion extremism by Democratic public lawmakers. So here I am again today to condemn and address these horrific remarks and the unfortunate reality we are living in today in this country.

Last week, while opposing a bill to protect unborn human life, Democratic Alabama State Representative John Rogers said: “Some kids are unwanted, so you kill them now or you kill them later.” He went on to say: “You bring them in the world unwanted, unloved, you send them to the electric chair. So you kill them now or you kill them later.”

These reprehensible remarks reveal a disturbing abortion extremism that has become far too normal, too accepted by the Democrats. All human life is precious, no matter the stage of development or disability. We must never forget these are innocent babies we are talking about.

Just this week, Democratic Pennsylvania State Representative Brian Sims posted a disgraceful video of himself online—I encourage you to go and watch it—a disgraceful video of himself online harassing three teenage girls who were praying outside a Planned Parenthood abortion clinic. He went as far as promising to pay \$100 to anyone who would identify these innocent teenage girls.

Horrific comments like Representative Rogers' and harassment of pro-life teens by Representative Sims should be condemned at the State and the national level by all, regardless of political party. We must not let this continue to be the norm in our society. We must fight back.

I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate Democratic leader is recognized.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on Tuesday afternoon, our country suffered another shooting—this time in Highlands Ranch, CO. It was the second shooting of the week following a weekend where at least 19 people were shot in Baltimore, 16 in St. Louis, and 28 in Chicago.

My grandson is less than a year old. He turned over in his crib last night—great accomplishment. But on a serious note, I don't want him to live in a world where this is the norm. I don't want him to see this on TV every other week. I don't want him to come home after school to tell his parents about learning to hide under a desk with the lights off. I don't want him to grow up in a country where children and adolescents are more than 20 times more likely to be killed with guns than their peers in other high-income countries.

I want him—little Noah and every other child in America—to live in a world where America's gun violence epidemic is a thing of the past. It may seem a naive thought in a cynical time, but I believe we can get there. We can take steps right now to make these incidents less likely. Nothing will prevent them, but there are lots of things we can do to make them a lot less frequent. A few months ago, the House did just that. The House passed legislation to close the loopholes in Federal background checks—something that more than 90 percent of all Americans support.

No one here pretends that we can prevent every incident, but we have a choice to face between moving in the right direction in a significant way and doing nothing. That is why I am so disappointed once again that Leader McCONNELL and the Republican majority have turned this Chamber into a

legislative graveyard where even the most bipartisan, broadly supported legislation like background checks can't even get a vote or a discussion. Here we are at the end of another week in the Senate. This week, we have done nothing but process nominations. It is not because there is nothing else to do. There are over 100 bills—many non-controversial and many bipartisan—that have passed the House and are awaiting Senate action, but Leader MCCONNELL has turned the Senate into a legislative graveyard.

When the American people demand action, Leader MCCONNELL does nothing. When the American people demand action, the Senate Republicans are in obeisance to this strategy of a graveyard, even when in their hearts they may know doing that is not right and they would like to debate the issues, whatever their views.

Leader MCCONNELL promised to preside over an open Senate, with vigorous debate and amendment votes and the ability to vote on issues of the day. He promised that, and he said no matter which party offered the ideas. Leader MCCONNELL is breaking those promises when he consigns bill after bill—every one of them needed by America, needed by the middle class, needed by working people—every one of them to a legislative graveyard. So there are no debates, no amendments, no progress, no hope for the American people as the Senate continues to be in such a legislative graveyard.

#### PUERTO RICO

Madam President, on Puerto Rico, last night President Trump held his first Florida rally of the year in Panama City, in the heart of the Florida Panhandle, which was so awfully devastated by Hurricane Michael last year. President Trump's speech contained all the usual demagoguery and bloviating, but one thing in particular stuck in his craw. The President used his rally in Florida to denigrate once again the island of Puerto Rico, to repeat falsehoods about how much aid it has received, and to pit one American against another, which seems to be his MO.

Again, the President said that Puerto Rico has gotten \$91 billion of disaster aid—flat-out false. They received a hair over \$11 billion.

Mr. President, ask your budget people how many dollars Puerto Rico has received, and they will not tell you the \$91 billion falsehood you have repeated over and over.

Again, I saw the President pit Americans against each other, going so far as to hold up a flimsy graphic to get Floridians in his audience to turn against Americans in Puerto Rico. At a time when we need unity, at a time when we should be together, with all the threats challenging us—domestic and foreign and all the other types of challenges—all the President can do is to appeal to people's worst instincts and divide us. We are humans. We are made by God. We have good and bad in each of us.

The President should be appealing to the good side, not the bad side, but all he does is the bad side. It is a shame.

Of course, he said that Puerto Ricans should be grateful for whatever disaster aid they have received, as a pretext for not doing more. Does he say that to the people of Florida: You shouldn't get any more aid because you received some already and you should be grateful. Of course not, it is a double standard. President Trump ought to be ashamed of himself for condescending to and publicly mocking a community that is still suffering. These are men, women, and children. They still don't have their homes, their hospitals, their schools. They can't go on with life, and he is mocking them? What did they do wrong? They are American citizens. I sometimes cannot believe the depth of cruelty that the President uses to treat fellow American citizens this way.

The fact remains, we can end the impasse over disaster aid at a moment's notice. To the people of Florida: All you have to do is tell your Senators to vote for the full aid package, including aid to Puerto Rico, and you will get all the aid you need, all the aid that Congress has allocated. Just do that.

But Republican Senators, after Donald Trump went in and said no more aid to Puerto Rico, blindly bowed in obeisance. The House will never pass a bill that doesn't treat Puerto Rico as fairly as it treats the other States of the Union.

Let's decide now that we are going to help every corner of America that is hit by disaster, because that is what Americans have always done.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Madam President, on the climate and dark money, I want to return to the topic of climate change, specifically today. Why in our political system has progress on climate change been so slow? Why is it that so many Republicans here in the Senate are afraid to say yes to three questions: Is climate change real? Is it caused by humans? Should we do something about it? They are afraid to say yes on any of those. Why? It is so obvious to almost everybody else.

Well, one of the dominant reasons is that for decades Big Oil, Big Gas, and Big Coal have devoted huge financial resources to stymie political progress and sow doubt about climate science. For years, one of the biggest perpetrators of this anti-climate campaign has been the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The national chamber of commerce, which bears almost no resemblance to local chambers across the country, has acted like a fossil fuel front group. It accepts millions of dollars in dark money, will not reveal its secret donors, and has consistently fought any attempts by our government to grapple with climate change—carbon pricing, reducing methane emissions, and even the Paris climate accords.

The game has become so obvious that major American corporations have disassociated themselves with the chamber over its climate policies.

Recently, the chamber has begun to talk as if it intends to get better on climate change. They added a new page to their website and announced an "energy innovation" agenda. I welcome the progress. But truthfully, the chamber has made a shocking about-face from climate denier to supposed climate believer and advocate. It is hard not to be skeptical. Now, if the chamber were serious about combating climate change, it would disclose its donors and let the world see that it is finally changing. Maybe it would even start endorsing different candidates or getting behind truly bold legislation. Maybe they can come here and lobby that we should support the Paris accords. Until that day, the chamber's so-called big change on climate seems to be cosmetic.

It may seem that I am spending an awful lot of time on one group, but it matters. The chamber is part of a vast network of generally rightwing organizations that accept and disseminate billions of dollars of special interest money with zero disclosure. It has warped our political process by creating a financial incentive for many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to oppose climate policies that deal with climate change, to oppose appropriate consumer protections, to oppose environmental protections, and to oppose issues such as gun safety, as well.

Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island has done an amazing—an outstanding job—of bringing this issue to the forefront and exposing the web of dark money that lurks evilly behind our politics. I want to thank and commend him for it.

I am glad that organizations like the chamber are feeling the heat for opposing climate change and proposed solutions. They should. But the bigger and more pervasive issue is that dark money will continue to flow into our political system until we change it. Until we deal with it or until groups start voluntary disclosures, in all likelihood these organizations will continue to frustrate the progress behind the scenes and the longing we all have to keep our planet the beautiful place that it is and to prevent the seas from rising and the weather from changing and the coral reefs from disappearing. That will not become a reality as long as this dark money is still having a stranglehold on so many of the other party.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak as in morning

business for up to 5 minutes, and that following my remarks, Senator ROSEN be recognized to speak as in morning business for as much time as she may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WELCOMING SENATOR ROSEN OF NEVADA

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you, Madam President. I come to the floor today to honor my colleague and dear friend, Senator JACKY ROSEN, as she prepares to deliver her maiden speech in this Chamber.

Senator ROSEN has spent her career pushing boundaries and advocating for innovation and inclusivity. She is bringing that vision to the U.S. Senate, where she has already proved herself to be a strong advocate for Nevadans by fighting to bolster our State's tech industries, supporting our veterans, and protecting Nevadans' healthcare.

When JACKY was elected to the Senate, we sat down and talked about how we could best serve Nevada together. We requested different committee assignments so we could be sure we were covering all the issue areas that are important to Nevadans. We made sure our staffs were connected and working together on projects, not only in DC but in the great Silver State of Nevada.

We committed to coming together every Wednesday morning in DC to welcome Nevadans to the Capitol and hear their stories. Those Wednesday morning constituent coffees are one of the highlights, I think, of both of our weeks. Anyone lucky enough to work with JACKY knows that she works tirelessly to build consensus and find solutions that help better the lives of Nevada families. I am honored to work beside her every day to serve the people of Nevada. I am proud to call her my friend, and I want to congratulate her on making her maiden speech this morning. I look forward to this and to many more as we continue to fight together for the Silver State.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, I thank Senator CORTEZ MASTO for that great introduction.

I am honored and humbled to address this distinguished body as the newest Senator from the great State of Nevada and to stand alongside an exceptional group of colleagues with a shared commitment to public service. I am especially honored to hold this seat, as it once belonged to a great Nevada public servant, Senator Richard Bryan. Senator Bryan served in just about every position in government, from assemblyman to Governor. He worked tirelessly to advance civil rights, empower women in government, and defend Nevada's public lands. I am so honored to carry his values with me to move Nevada forward.

As I take up this mantle in the Senate, I am prepared to continue Senator Bryan's legacy and work for Nevadans,

while also building toward a legacy of our own. I stand here as Nevada's 28th Senator and, for the first time in history, as one of two women to represent our State in the Senate. I am proud to be part of such an incredible movement of strong, passionate, trailblazing women like Senator CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, who became the first female Senator to represent the great State of Nevada and the first Latina elected to serve in the Senate.

Everywhere, we are seeing women who are stepping up to lead, and I am thrilled to have the chance to empower women who are looking to break barriers along the way. By bringing more women to the decision-making table, we can open doors and make progress on issues that affect us and our hard-working families on a daily basis. When women put their minds together, there is no new ground we cannot break, and there is no glass ceiling we cannot shatter.

I stand here today to share my vision for how we can work together—on both sides of the aisle—to lay down a framework for progress because Nevadans and Americans everywhere are counting on us to go above and beyond, to overcome obstacles before us, and to find commonsense, forward-thinking solutions for the challenges of this new era—challenges like immigration reform, which protects our Dreamers and TPS recipients; challenges like a changing 21st century economy and climate change; and, of course, an issue that is so important to hard-working families everywhere, the challenge of access to affordable, quality healthcare.

Before I discuss where we are going, let me tell you just a bit about where I come from—my values and the ways in which my story has helped to shape who I am and how it will shape who I will be as Nevada's newest Senator.

I am the proud granddaughter of immigrants and a first-generation college graduate who worked my way through college waiting tables. Yes, I am a former member of the Culinary Workers Union, and I saved my tips in envelopes to pay for that college tuition. I am a computer programmer and a systems analyst who worked my way up in what has been long considered a male-dominated industry.

I am a wife to my husband Larry, a radiologist, whom I can always count on to be by my side. I am a mother to my wonderful daughter Miranda, whom I am so proud of and who inspires me every day to build a better future for our country.

I am a former president of my synagogue—the largest synagogue in Nevada—and during my tenure, I witnessed the beauty of our country's religious diversity and how community engagement strengthens America. I also learned the importance of working together to fight against anti-Semitism, which we are seeing now, once again, rear its ugly head here at home and around the globe.

Remembering where I come from, my story, my roots, this is what guides me every day to make decisions to help working families. When it comes to issues like college affordability and education, equal pay for equal work, labor rights, combating hate and anti-Semitism, and standing up for Israel, I can speak from personal experience.

I am reminded that my story is just one of many from Las Vegas to Reno, to Searchlight, to Lovelock, and everywhere in between because I hear from Nevadans who share some of those same stories from every part of the rich, vibrant fabric that makes up our diverse State, including Latinos, Asian Americans, African Americans, Tribal communities, and beyond.

When I think of the shores of Lake Tahoe and of Lake Mead, the majestic canyons of Red Rock, the open skies across the desert, and the mountains that shine below them like jewels in the sun, I think of home. Nothing rings more true to me than saying home means Nevada to me.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

Madam President, we are a State that was born to take on challenges. We come together from every walk of life to make cities that shine from out of the desert. We are battle born, and we are battle tested, and it is our grit, our perseverance, and our diversity that truly capture who we are. It is those same qualities that will help us change the face of our Nation.

Remembering where we come from—that philosophy—is a driving force behind my support for environmental policies that will protect our States' treasures, including our mountains, rivers, and lakes.

I am honored to represent the most beautiful State in the country, but there is one environmental issue that threatens Nevada's beautiful landscapes and the families that call our State home, and that is Yucca Mountain. Nevada has made it clear time and again that we will not become the Nation's dumping ground for nuclear waste. Yet we continue to see relentless efforts to turn our State into the Nation's sole nuclear waste repository without our consent, even after we have made our voices heard, even though Nevada does not create nuclear waste. Congress must respect our will and our rights as a State because our voice matters. I stand prepared to use every tool at my disposal to defend our State from attempts to revive this project.

I will continue to fight to keep our State beautiful by standing up for clean air and clean water, by protecting public lands and investing in clean energy, by taking real action to address climate change. I know we can leave the world a better place for future generations.

We also know there are commonsense ways to address our climate challenges, including investing in renewable energy right at home. In Nevada, solar

energy is both creating jobs and helping us to lead a way toward a clean energy future. That is why, last year in the House, I led the charge against harmful solar tariffs that threatened to roll back the progress we have made and why I introduced legislation to train our veterans for good-paying jobs—solar jobs—that can both support families and reduce our carbon footprint.

I will continue these efforts here in the Senate because our energy independence and the future of our planet should never be partisan issues.

#### HIRE STUDENT VETERANS ACT

Madam President, in Nevada, we care for one another, and we believe in looking out for one another, and that is especially true for our veterans, who make up a significant part of our State. Over 226,000 veterans call Nevada home. Our heroes in the armed services and their families risk everything—everything—to protect our Nation. One way we can honor them is by helping our heroes successfully transition to civilian life once they have completed their military service.

After talking to countless veterans and military families in Nevada, I introduced the Hire Student Veterans Act as my first bill in the Senate. This bipartisan legislation incentivizes business to hire our student vets who are currently using their benefits to study. We made a promise to take care of our veterans when they return home, and the last thing they should have to worry about is not being able to obtain a good education or a good-paying job. I know this commonsense legislation will further ensure that our student vets are on the pathway toward success and that Nevada and our Nation will benefit from their continued contributions.

#### ECONOMIC GROWTH

Madam President, in Nevada, we are leading the way; we are doing right by hard-working families in areas like clean energy and technology. As a former computer programmer, I am so excited about our State's growing tech industry, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Small Business Committee to provide our tech startups the tools they need to succeed and create jobs and on the Commerce Committee, where we are tackling important issues like cyber security and privacy and, for our rural communities, critical access to rural broadband, which they sorely need.

In all of these efforts, I look forward to bringing new stakeholders to the table because we can all gain so much insight when we listen to our constituents and we embrace bold ideas to improve their lives.

We have also grown our economy and created good-paying jobs by legalizing recreational marijuana in our State. This industry is bringing millions of dollars in revenue to Nevada. Yet our marijuana businesses continue to operate on a cash-only basis as a result of outdated Federal laws that are block-

ing their access to important financial services. We cannot expect these businesses to succeed when the Federal Government refuses to keep up with the times. That is why I am supporting bipartisan legislation to give marijuana businesses access to our banking system so that they can safely operate and continue contributing to our economy.

It is through bipartisan action that we can encourage economic growth in every corner of our State and every corner of our country.

Since coming to Congress, I have consistently made it a priority to reach across the aisle on issues where both parties can find common ground. At a time of increasing political division and partisan gridlock, it is even more important for both sides to come together, to make progress on the issues that are impacting Americans at home.

I am so proud of the work I have been able to do with my colleagues from both parties. Last Congress, I was named one of the most bipartisan freshman Members during my first term and was one of the first Democrats to be recognized with an award by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for supporting pro-growth policies.

I will continue to take every action to fight for Nevada's hard-working families. We must act boldly, and we must do more to provide opportunities—opportunities for our children through improving education and working across the aisle to invest in our children's future.

#### BUILDING BLOCKS OF STEM ACT

Madam President, earlier this year, I introduced the Building Blocks of STEM Act. In the Senate we are going to try to make those investments in early childhood STEM education. My bipartisan, bicameral bill will give our kids the opportunities to explore STEM-related fields at an early age and set them up for success because we need a 21st century education if we hope to succeed in a 21st century economy.

It is only through robust, quality education that we can build that strong workforce that will grow our Nation's economy and ensure that our children and our Nation will ultimately succeed.

Protecting our environment and public lands, embracing clean energy, honoring America's heroes and their families, supporting economic growth, investing in our children's education, these are just a few of the ways we can work together across the aisle.

We can improve lives by listening to the voices of those who sent us here to represent us and by working together to create a healthy, educated, and economically empowered future for all and, most importantly, by agreeing everywhere we can, especially on the issues that matter most to families at home.

#### HEALTHCARE

Madam President, there is no issue that matters more than healthcare. I

have met with countless parents, grandparents, families, who rely on access to healthcare to keep themselves and their precious loved ones healthy.

One of the reasons Nevada ranks near the bottom when it comes to access to care is that we continue to face a shortage of physicians, particularly in primary care. This is especially true for Nevadans living in rural and Tribal communities, with many of our State's residents having to drive hundreds of miles to seek medical care or they simply go without care.

We know that many other States face similar problems. We need forward-thinking solutions to make sure that States like ours have enough doctors to serve our population. We need to help communities in rural and underserved areas gain access to telehealth programs so that we are able to provide better access to critical services, not just to Nevadans but to all Americans, no matter where they live.

We need transparency when it comes to drug pricing because no person should be forced to decide between paying their bills and buying lifesaving medication. Let's not forget that we need equal access to healthcare for women, for LGBTQ, and for underrepresented communities.

We must protect our healthcare system from sabotage by this administration. This month, the Trump administration made yet another move to take healthcare coverage and critical protections away from millions nationwide, instructing our own Justice Department to refuse to defend the Affordable Care Act. We are no longer just talking about stripping away protections for those with preexisting conditions, as if that weren't enough. We are in even more dangerous territory than before because if our healthcare law is completely wiped out, we will see an end—an end—to the tax credits that make coverage affordable for middle-income families; we will see an end to preventive care without copays, like health screenings and contraceptives; we will see an end to the ability of young adults under the age of 26 to stay on their parents' insurance; and we will see an end to Medicaid benefits, which have helped over 200,000 Nevadans get coverage.

If this administration has its way with invalidating our healthcare law, it would spell disaster for primary care providers and the millions of Americans who rely on its protections for access to quality, affordable care.

Healthcare is one of the top issues at every kitchen table in communities like Winnemucca and Henderson and across this country. I can't even begin to count the number of Nevadans who have shared with me how they would be affected by this disastrous decision and who tell me what it means in their personal lives not to have to live in fear of being denied coverage for a preexisting condition. Over 1.2 million Nevadans live with a preexisting condition. We all know what is at stake if

these individuals are denied access to care.

There are plenty of ways we can work to improve the Affordable Care Act and lower healthcare costs, but destroying the law and leaving our loved ones at risk is simply unacceptable.

As a member of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions here in the Senate, I am working on solutions each day to bring resources, accountability, and relief to our healthcare system, including supporting legislation to bring down our skyrocketing drug costs and programs that bolster telemedicine in our rural and underserved communities because healthcare is a personal issue that affects each and every one of us, and we all know that just one diagnosis can change your life in an instant.

The Senate today faces many challenges, none more so than the polarization and division that prevents us from coming together in pursuit of the public interest. In his farewell address, Nevada Senator Richard Bryan stated: "If we can restore civility in our public discourse, as we debate the great issues and policy differences of our time, if we can apply the rules that govern the process by which we conduct the Senate's business fairly to all, and if we can work together for the common good, I am confident that the future of the Senate can be as bright as the past."

So this is my pledge to all of you: I will be an independent voice for all Nevadans by agreeing where I can and fighting where I must. There is nothing more important to me than taking care of my home, our home, your families, and all of our families because home means Nevada to me.

During my first few weeks as a Senator, I joined Senator MANCHIN in helping lead the effort to defend the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act. Our resolution will direct the Senate legal counsel to intervene in the Federal court case, where our healthcare system is under attack, to defend our current law, including protections for preexisting conditions.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 18

Madam President, that is why, as my first action while holding the floor of the Senate, I would like to ask you this:

As in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Rules Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 18 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the resolution to be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ROSEN. This is why Nevadans sent me here—to protect their healthcare. And that is what I am

going to do; that is what I will continue to do.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from South Dakota.

MEDICARE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if you are in a shaky financial situation, wondering how you are going to meet your obligations, your first instinct isn't generally to wildly increase your spending, unless, of course, you are a congressional Democrat.

Our Nation's Medicare system is on shaky financial ground. Democrats' answer is to massively expand the program to the tune of trillions of dollars.

Two weeks ago, the Social Security and Medicare trustees released their annual report. According to the report, beginning in 2026, Medicare will not be able to meet its obligations. This doesn't even seem to register on Democrats' radar. They steamroll right past the program's already shaky financial status and ask the American people to believe that, somehow, massively expanding the program to include almost the entire U.S. population at a pricetag of staggering proportions will work.

It is difficult to overstate just how unrealistic Democrats' Medicare for All fantasy is. Start with the pricetag: \$32 trillion over 10 years. To put that number in perspective, that is more money than the Federal Government has spent in the last 8 years combined—on everything. That \$32 trillion estimate is likely too low, as it was based on an earlier version of the Medicare for All plan of the Senator from Vermont. His new plan also includes a massive new benefit—funding for long-term care, an enormously expensive part of the healthcare system.

Democrats' last attempt to have the government run a long-term care program fell apart before it was even implemented because the program was not financially viable.

Let's leave aside for a minute the tremendous cost and the tax hikes on ordinary Americans that would be required to pay for it. Let's talk about the massive difficulty of implementing such a system. The junior Senator from Vermont expects people to believe that the government can successfully transition more than 180 million people off of their private insurance and into government-run healthcare in 4 years. To put that in perspective, the Obama administration had 3½ years to implement the ObamaCare exchanges, which were intended to cover a tiny fraction of the number of people who would be covered under Medicare for All. As I am sure most Americans remember, the government couldn't put together a working website in that 3½ year time period. Yet Democrats somehow expect us to believe that they can smoothly transition 180 million Americans into government-run insurance in just 4 years.

We are also somehow supposed to believe things will be much more effi-

cient with government running your healthcare. It is certainly true there is a lot of bureaucracy in our current healthcare system, but I am fairly sure the answer is not giving control of healthcare to the mother ship of bureaucracy—the Federal Government. Democrats also apparently expect Americans to believe that the Federal Government will be able to deliver almost unlimited healthcare for free. Unfortunately, no matter how much money the Federal Government takes in with higher taxes, there will eventually be a limit to how much it can spend on healthcare.

What happens when it can't afford to meet demand, which, by the way, tends to increase substantially when something is offered for free? I will tell you what happens: long wait times and rationing of care, which have become the hallmarks of socialized medicine in other countries.

There is no question that our healthcare system is not perfect. Republicans are currently working on legislation to address some of the healthcare challenges facing Americans, but destroying our current health system to fix the problems we have would be like razing a house to the ground to fix a leak in the bathroom sink.

There are lots of good things about our healthcare system. A lot of people in this country are happy with their healthcare. We need to preserve the good things about our system and fix what is not working and not force everyone into a fantastically expensive one-size-fits-all, government-run healthcare system that would reduce everyone's quality of care.

The Democratic chairman of the House Rules Committee, discussing a House hearing on Medicare for All, recently said: "It's a serious proposal that deserves serious consideration on Capitol Hill."

I would argue that it is the exact opposite. The only things that are serious about this proposal are the serious consequences it would have for the American people if it were ever implemented. It is deeply irresponsible of my Democrat colleagues to peddle this government-run nightmare as a legitimate healthcare solution. One of our former colleagues, Tom Coburn, used to say: If you think healthcare is expensive now, wait until it is free.

Let's hope Democrats decide to take a more serious approach to healthcare reform before Americans are forced to live under the ugly reality of their socialist fantasy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING ROBERT MCKEITHEN

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I respect the time-honored practice of this body which encourages new Members to listen and observe before speaking on the floor. There is value in humility—knowing when to talk and when to listen.

First, let me say it is a great privilege to represent the people of Mississippi in the United States Senate. I am working hard to support the needs of all Mississippians and to justify the confidence placed in me by the people of my great State.

Today I rise to speak on several important topics. First and foremost, I rise to honor Officer Robert McKeithen, a 24-year-decorated veteran of the Biloxi Police Department who lost his life in the line of duty this past Sunday night, May 5.

Officer McKeithen was described by his chief as “an unbelievably fine policeman.” He was an Air Force veteran, a husband, and a father who dedicated his life to serving the people of Biloxi, my State, and our Nation. His loss is a tragedy and a stark reminder that law enforcement officers risk their lives daily to keep us safe. Officer McKeithen’s family, colleagues, and friends certainly have my deepest sympathy.

## DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. President, I also rise to speak on behalf of thousands of Mississippians who have been affected by catastrophic flooding and other natural disasters this year. Their plight and the unmet commitment made to them long ago provide us an opportunity to evaluate how we as public servants meet the expectations of the people.

On February 25, 2019, the Governor of Mississippi declared a state of emergency due to strong storms, torrential rainfall, and severe flooding. Homes, property, businesses, and public infrastructure had been damaged statewide. On April 23, President Trump granted a major disaster declaration for the State of Mississippi to help communities recover from these events. I am grateful for the President’s actions.

A large portion of West Central Mississippi is experiencing the worst flood records since 1973. On April 1, more than 512,000 acres were flooded. Now, a little more than a month later, more than 488,000 acres in this highly productive agricultural region are still underwater, with conditions forecasted to get worse before they improve. To put that into perspective, these floodwaters span nearly 762 square miles as we speak. This flooding is affecting homes, roads, bridges, churches, schools, and the overall health and public safety of area residents. Septic tanks are overflowing. Snakes are in houses. The bloated bodies of drowned deer, bear, hogs, and other wildlife float in stagnant water. The residents of Mississippi’s Eagle Lake are basically on an island. If someone needs emergency healthcare, it is virtually impossible for an ambulance to get to them.

Further, hundreds of thousands of acres of prime agriculture and timberland will suffer significant damage or simply go unplanted this season. The economic impact on agriculture alone will be in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

I observed the magnitude of the flooding and damages firsthand in a flyover with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers a month ago. The situation on the ground is no different today. It is truly heartbreaking to see. While the full extent of damage can’t be assessed until the floodwaters recede and residents can return to their homes, Mississippians, along with those in the Midwest experiencing similar challenges, need relief also.

I commend the Appropriations Committee chairman and vice chairman for their continued efforts to reach an agreement on an emergency funding measure to help individuals and communities recover from natural disasters. I am especially grateful for their willingness to consider expanding the scope of the legislation to address the 2019 natural disasters. Federal assistance alone will not solve all the problems, and a long road to recovery lies ahead. However, disaster supplemental legislation will provide a very important first step.

The outcome of the push and pull over disaster assistance highlights the need for us, as elected representatives, to consistently evaluate the Federal Government’s performance on delivering promises to the American people. I cannot speak for others, but Mississippians would like to see more action and less acting from their leaders in Washington. Our Nation’s environmental review and permitting process for infrastructure projects is the epitome of a flawed and broken bureaucracy in desperate need of repair.

President Trump’s Executive orders to expedited environmental reviews and approvals for high-priority infrastructure projects speak to the American public’s frustration toward Washington and the never-ending bureaucratic redtape carried over from the Obama administration. I am grateful this administration has taken a strong stance to bring common sense to government operations. It should not take years and numerous acts of Congress to expand and deepen ports or tackle important infrastructure projects that would generate jobs and add billions to our Nation’s economy. It should not take decades and numerous acts of Congress to complete critical flood control projects that will protect the lives and property of Americans while preventing the need for multibillion-dollar disaster measures. Congress should make it abundantly clear that one Federal Agency should not be able to prevent or delay another Federal Agency from delivering critical flood protections specifically authorized by the legislative branch. There are numerous examples of this—what most Americans consider bad government—

across the country. The catastrophic flooding taking place in Mississippi is a prime example of one Agency that has worked at odds with another to the detriment of the public. So many Mississippians are exasperated by the fact that they are losing their homes and way of making a living, all the while knowing it could have been prevented.

The Federal Government has yet to put in place the flood control improvement it has promised area residents since 1941. The fact is, they have made it worse. Make no mistake, today’s flooding in Mississippi should not be happening. It is time for the Federal Government to step up and make good on its promises. It is time for the Federal Government to listen to the people in need of help and to help them.

Over the past seven decades, significant taxpayer dollars have been invested in the Lower Mississippi River Valley to construct a comprehensive, systematic flood control solution which today consists of levees, drainage channels, and floodgates. The last remaining feature of this 77-year effort remains unconstructed due to the excessive, overburdensome regulations and redtape. Because of this, Mississippians are once again losing their homes and businesses, roads and bridges are being destroyed, and wildlife is dying—their habitat lost to contaminated floodwaters.

I bring this to the attention of my colleagues because passage of disaster legislation is vital to my constituents and millions of people across the country. I also call attention to this situation to encourage us to strive to do a much better job in delivering for the American people. That is what our constituents expect, and that is what they deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

## NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I rise to speak about National Small Business Week. As ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I want to thank the 30 million small businesses in America for their contributions to our economy during this National Small Business Week.

I look forward to National Small Business Week every year because it is a chance for us to honor the small businesses and communities in Maryland and across the country that may not make headlines, but they steadily move our economy forward by improving industries, developing new products, and creating employment opportunities for more than 47 percent of all American workers.

One tradition of National Small Business Week is that the Small Business Administration selects a Small Business Person of the Year from each State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam.

This year’s Maryland Small Business Person of the Year is Zhensen Huang,



the chief executive officer of Precise Software Solutions—an innovative information technology company that is based in Rockville, MD. Dr. Huang is also a professor of information systems at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, where he is training future leaders in Maryland's technology sector.

Small business owners like Dr. Huang are the cornerstone of Maryland's economy, and their deep roots in the community help to shape the culture and character of our State. I thank Dr. Huang for bringing dynamism and ingenuity to Maryland's economy, and I wish him and his colleagues continued success.

I have met with countless small business owners like Dr. Huang as I have traveled across my home State of Maryland, which we proudly call "America in Miniature" due to our diversity. From bustling metropolitan areas like Baltimore City and the DC suburbs to rural communities on the Eastern Shore and in Mountain Maryland, small businesses are not just where we buy products and services; they are the building blocks that make up our communities.

That is why I requested a seat on the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee when I began serving in the Senate in 2007. I wanted to make sure small businesses in Maryland and across the country were receiving the support they needed from Washington. Nationwide, small businesses account for 99.9 percent of all businesses, with there being a total of nearly 31 million small businesses that employ 60 million Americans.

According to the Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, small businesses created 1.8 million net jobs in 2016, the most recent year for which data is available. Of those jobs created, more than 1.2 million were created by small businesses with fewer than 20 employees. It is clear that small businesses are the growth engine that power our economy, so it is on us in Congress to ensure that they receive the support they need to overcome the unique challenges they face.

When I meet with small businesses across Maryland, one of their top concerns is often their access to capital. Capital is the lifeblood of small businesses. So, for many small businesses, an SBA-backed loan is a lifeline that is the difference between success and failure in the early, fragile stages of a small business's life.

I see the benefits of SBA-backed loans every time I drive past Under Armour's headquarters in Baltimore. Without an SBA-backed loan, Under Armour may not have been able to grow from a small business being run out of a basement to the global brand, with thousands of employees in Baltimore, that it is today. Last year alone, SBA-backed financing helped nearly 75,000 small businesses access more than \$36 billion in capital, and it supported more than 725,000 jobs.

The SBA's finance programs are models of public-private partnerships and do a lot of good in this country, but some of the programs are not adequately reaching underserved communities, especially those of minorities, women, and veterans. I do note that the SBA's Microloan Program and the 7(a) Community Advantage Pilot Program do punch above their weight in reaching underserved borrowers. We can learn from how those programs are being operated to help underserved communities in order to help modify loan programs such as the 7(a) and 504 so they may be able to reach more of the underserved communities.

The chronic shortfall of SBA loans reaching the minority communities is especially important in Maryland, which I am proud to say has the highest average number of minority-owned businesses in the country. Minority-owned firms are two to three times more likely to be denied credit, more likely to avoid applying for loans based on the belief that they will be turned down, and more likely to receive smaller loans and pay higher interest rates on the loans they do receive.

Last September, I held a field hearing in Baltimore at Morgan State University—a revered HBCU—to learn more about the struggles minority entrepreneurs face in their accessing of capital.

One of the key takeaways from the hearing was that minority small business owners need SBA to fill the gaps when private lenders often fall short. Additionally, access to capital must go hand in hand with entrepreneurial development training. The entrepreneurial development programs at the SBA provided mentorship, business advice, and training to more than 1.2 million entrepreneurs during fiscal year 2018.

These programs are invaluable. Data show that small businesses created by entrepreneurs who receive at least 3 hours of SBA counseling have higher success rates than small businesses created by entrepreneurs who have not received that amount of counseling.

Knowing that small businesses, especially minority-owned small businesses, need more support from the SBA, not less, is why I remain deeply troubled by the administration's efforts to make vital business counseling and SBA-backed loans more difficult to access.

The administration's fiscal year 2020 budget proposed more than a quarter of a billion dollars in new fees for SBA-backed loans. Simply put, this is a \$255 million tax on American small business owners. Additionally, instead of investing in entrepreneurial development programs, the administration's recent budget proposed \$67 million in cuts to these programs.

The administration's efforts to undermine the SBA are even more concerning considering the current lack of leadership at the Agency. Since the resignation of Administrator Linda

McMahon, the President has not sent Congress a nomination for a new Administrator. I also remain concerned about the administration's failure to nominate a Deputy Administrator—a position that has been vacant for more than 12 months.

We hear from the administration that we haven't acted on their nominees. We don't have the nominees to act on. As I speak, there are thousands of small business owners from across the country who are visiting Washington, DC, in order to participate in the National Small Business Week events that have been scheduled, and many more are participating in events across the country.

Let us honor them and their contributions by giving the SBA the tools and leadership it needs to help entrepreneurs build successful small businesses. I look forward to continuing to work with Chairman MARCO RUBIO and our colleagues in the House, in a bipartisan fashion, to support American small businesses so they can continue developing innovative products and services and creating jobs.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order of the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

#### REMEMBERING ROBERT PEAR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come to the floor today to pay tribute to a revered and distinguished member of the press corps, Robert Pear, a longtime reporter for the New York Times. He spent four decades in the corridors of this U.S. Capitol.

I often say that journalists are the watchdogs of democracy, and I really believe that—policing their beats to inform the public and, more importantly, to hold wrongdoers and especially our big government accountable. That makes them very valuable to preserving our representative system of government. These journalists serve as the eyes and ears of the American people—reporting on issues that impact the daily lives and livelihoods of our neighbors. From crime to education, healthcare, and foreign policy, journalists serve as guardians of the First Amendment.

That brings me to Robert.

On Tuesday, the healthcare beat lost a legendary reporter. The death of Robert Pear will be mourned for many years to come. As the dean of the national healthcare reporters, he established a reputation for hard-nosed reporting. For decades, he carried out a noble mission to inform the public, and he did it with integrity and fairness. He leaves behind a legacy of unmatched institutional knowledge, particularly in the area of healthcare policy.



As a policymaker and history buff myself, I read as much news as I can possibly get my hands on. On weekends, I catch up on my reading when traveling to and from Iowa. For every year I have served in the U.S. Senate, Mr. Pear's byline has appeared in the *New York Times*. I am told that it appeared more than 6,700 times. It is a byline that I made sure not to miss.

His work put meat on the bones of public policy. Even those of us who study legislation closely could learn a lot and did learn a lot from his writings. Substantive and crisp, his exceptional reporting delivered a thorough analysis of complex issues and then without a doubt influenced the policy conversation on healthcare.

His prolific pen sharpened the minds of readers, including staff and lawmakers who wrote legislation here on Capitol Hill. It even informed lobbyists who worked to penetrate and influence the debate. His work carried weight with those who implemented healthcare policy from the executive branch, including the White House, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the National Institutes of Health, and the Food and Drug Administration.

Now that he has passed away, his absence on the healthcare beat here on Capitol Hill will be missed profoundly. His understanding of the mechanics of health policy were without equal. He was able to wade through the weeds of our archaic Federal spending formulas for Medicare and Medicaid and decipher their impact on the delivery of care in my rural communities but also urban America. Mr. Pear deftly communicated how proposed changes would affect patient care, from the point of service to the pharmaceutical counter and the pocketbooks of consumers. Policymakers, providers, patients, and the taxpayers have been well-served by this giant of journalism.

Unlike many of his peers, Mr. Pear shunned the spotlight by just doing the old-fashioned shoe-leather reporting. Unassuming and understated, Mr. Pear let his published work speak for itself.

I am sure you are going to hear from Ranking Member WYDEN shortly, and he knows Mr. Pear very well and would agree with some of these things I say.

Before holding a press conference to unveil a bill dealing with healthcare, any Senator, including this one, had to be sure to have all their ducks in a row. No lawmaker wanted to be a sitting duck with Robert Pear in the front row of the press gaggle.

I will miss his bylines, particularly the extent to which they helped to educate me, helped me to understand policy that other Members of Congress were promoting and maybe even learning from his criticism on some stands that I took.

Today, I extend my condolences to his family, friends, and peers. I salute his lifelong contribution through exemplary service on behalf of the American

people—most importantly, policing the process of representative government and making sure that government and those of us who serve in government are accountable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, I just want to thank the chairman of the Finance Committee. I think the chairman said: Well, the ranking member might agree with some of my comments. I agree with every one of the chairman's comments.

I think, Madam President, how I would begin—and I think the Chairman would agree on this—we can have some pretty spirited debates about healthcare in this Chamber and in the Finance Committee, but, as the chairman indicated, there isn't an inch of difference with respect to our views on Robert Pear. We all thought he was a true professional, and he was the gold standard of journalism as it relates to healthcare.

I thought about yesterday, Chairman GRASSLEY, because we had a hearing on a topic relating to reimbursement of physicians. I think the chairman and I would be of like mind—it probably wouldn't be inherently fascinating in every coffee shop in Iowa and Oregon, but it is incredibly important, for example, for the survival of rural hospitals and so many concerns that I know the Presiding Officer of the Senate has and the distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee has. I looked over at the press table, Chairman GRASSLEY, and the seat for Robert Pear was missing.

Robert Pear—and that was what this special man was all about—never jumped to sit in front and say: Well, I am from the *New York Times*, so I should count more. As the chairman remembers, he always sat in the back.

I thought we missed him so much yesterday. The chairman and I had just gotten the news. What we were talking about yesterday was what Robert Pear was all about—taking a very complicated issue that probably was not inherently fascinating and putting it in very simple, understandable, thoughtful words for the American people. As the chairman correctly said, that was what everybody would wait for when there was a complicated issue. You would hear it among Republicans, the chairman's staff, and my staff. People would hear about an issue, and very often, the first thing they would say was "Did Robert Pear write about it?"

If Robert Pear wrote about it, it was important. In fact, one of the most noteworthy aspects of the incredible outpouring of affection and admiration for Robert Pear yesterday—and the chairman and I talked about it in committee—is the *New York Times* had a slug called "Pear on Health," and all over the country, my guess is—the *Des Moines Register*; the *Oregonian*, my paper, a big paper in Oregon—they

would all wait for the Robert Pear slug because they knew that was a very important issue.

The fact that Robert Pear wasn't at the witness table yesterday after all these years broke our hearts and brought back a lot of memories. I actually was stunned over the years—and the chairman touched on it—by his encyclopedic knowledge of healthcare. He remembered the amendment to the amendment to the amendment to the amendment that somebody offered 10 or 15 years ago.

When I came to the Congress, he went and studied the history of the Gray Panthers. I was codirector of the senior citizens group. My little one still wonders if they are the Pink Panthers. Robert Pear knew everything about that.

When he was up on the Hill—and the chairman probably remembers this—he had a little notebook in which he scribbled Chairman GRASSLEY's remarks or my remarks or whoever he was talking to, but he also had bigger notebooks, and he kept an exhaustive set of files.

In a town where, particularly at important post-hearing or post-legislation events, all the reporters are shouting one above another, Robert Pear was the most soft-spoken voice in the room. In fact, I was at some events—my guess is that the chairman was as well—where it got kind of loud and frantic. They were throwing microphones and the like at you. When Robert Pear raised his hand and was called on, the room hushed. It went quiet because everybody understood that the question Robert Pear would ask was the right one.

Senator GRASSLEY and I were talking yesterday about how we particularly appreciated and felt—Republicans and Democrats—that Robert Pear was fair to all sides, and he held us all accountable. The general sense was that if you were a legislator and you were going to be interviewed by Robert Pear, you better go out and do some serious prep work because he would know the subject inside-out and in that soft-spoken way would just stay at it until he excavated the real effects. That was part of the Pear "tell the right story in the right way" approach to ensure that if you read a Robert Pear health story, you learned something. I think most Senators would agree that is not always the case with every single story, but that was the standard Robert Pear set.

I think what I would like to say is that there are going to be a number of Senators who over the years had a chance to work with Robert Pear. We are going to hear their own accounts of their relationships, but we are not going to hear one single Senator—not one—say that Robert Pear tried to make them look bad, took a cheap shot, or tried to say something flashy in order to get a headline. They are going to say just the opposite. They are going to say: That is what journalism is supposed to be all about.

I am a journalist's kid and very proud of it. My dad was a first-generation Jewish kid. He taught himself English and was a journalist. He always said: "Ron, the journalist's job is to ask the tough questions—the tough questions that really matter."

Robert Pear asked the tough questions, no doubt about that, but he always did it in a very unique way, a fair way, a thoughtful way, a way that embodied the gold standard for journalism that I have described.

So yesterday was particularly sad. We got the news in the morning. We had that healthcare hearing, which started about an hour after we got the news. The first thing I thought of as I came into the room was how hard it is going to be—and it is not going to stop hurting for a long time—to imagine that seat at the end of the press table not having the thoughtful, informed Robert Pear sitting there so he could get the facts to the American people.

So I just want to close today—we have had a number of colleagues speak already—to say, Robert, Robert Pear, you were the consummate professional. You were fair to the bone. It was an honor—an honor to get to work with you over the years in healthcare. We say goodbye to someone who was a true mensch, and this afternoon with heavy hearts, we think of Robert Pear and want the country to know what an extraordinary person he was.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I recognize the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come to speak on another matter, but I want to thank Senator WYDEN for the kind words he had to say, as well, about a very distinguished journalist.

ATTORNEY GENERAL BARR

Madam President, yesterday, the House Judiciary Committee voted to hold Attorney General Barr in contempt of Congress. Mr. Barr has been transparent. He made the Mueller report available to them—99 percent unredacted in the obstruction section of that report. Instead of reading it, the Democrats, who voted for contempt, moved like lightning straight to the charge of contempt. To me, that is not good-faith negotiation.

In a similar situation, now a few years ago, in a Democratic administration, with a Democratic Attorney General, with a House of Representatives held by Republicans, the House only held Attorney General Holder in contempt after many months of negotiation over documents that were withheld on bogus grounds; and just for connecting that to an issue, that was the Fast and Furious investigation that I was involved in as well. We had a very good case against Holder. We attempted to negotiate with Holder for a long period of time before the other body held him in contempt.

This particular issue of contempt of this Attorney General is not a good case. I would like to say, as a person who promotes congressional oversight

of every Democratic and every Republican President to make sure they faithfully execute the law, that what the House Judiciary Committee did yesterday, just a few days after Mr. Barr didn't do exactly what they wanted him to do and comparing that with the negotiations we had with the executive branch of the Obama Attorney General on Fast and Furious, is going to make it very difficult in the future for Congress to conduct its constitutional role of oversight because future Presidents are going to use this as an example of a bad-faith attempt to negotiate with the executive branch of Government to get what you want. Maybe what they want isn't real information or real congressional oversight; they may be trying to make political points.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday, the Judiciary Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration that I chair held a hearing on the humanitarian and security crisis along the southern border. One of the witnesses we heard from was Border Patrol Chief Carla Provost, who leads the dedicated law enforcement officers who safeguard our Nation's borders every day. She has been with the Border Patrol for 25 years, and she has witnessed firsthand the ebb and flow of border crossings during that entire quarter century.

Chief Provost announced the most recent data that shows how dire the situation along our southern border is. She described these numbers as off the charts, which I think is a gentle way of putting it.

Before I get to the numbers, let me provide some context. In October 2018, the start of the fiscal year, Customs and Border Protection encountered nearly 61,000 migrants at the border. That is higher than any month in the previous fiscal year. At the time, we were all alarmed by the increase, but last month's numbers completely eclipsed those levels. Chief Provost announced at our hearing yesterday that in the month of April, CBP encountered more than 109,000 illegal immigrants along the southern border. From October to April, we jumped from roughly 61,000 to 109,000 per month, a 78-percent increase over just the 6-month period.

In addition to that enormous monthly total, she told us about the record-breaking daily total last week. Border Patrol apprehended 5,200 people in a single day—the highest number on record. The problem is that we can't

simply send these migrants home under the current state of the law. So the more individuals we apprehend, the more detention space we need. If we don't have the detention space, these individuals would simply just be released into the American population. We will never hear from most of them again, unless they commit some other crime.

But the fact of the matter is, we are overtaxing the capabilities of the Border Patrol, of Customs and Border Protection, of the local communities, and of the nongovernmental organizations that try to assist these migrants while they are in our country and in our custody. On certain days over the last month, CBP has had more than 14,000 people in custody, far greater than the capacity they are able to hold.

People may ask: Why do we have to detain people? Why can't we just let them go and tell them to show back up for a future court date?

We know from sad experience that the majority will not return for that court date, even if they have legitimate claims for asylum. We now know that there are more than 700,000—I think approaching 800,000—backlog immigration cases waiting to be heard by an immigration judge. This, again, is overwhelming our capacity to deal with these on an individual basis.

Back to the numbers, earlier this week the Rio Grande Valley Sector announced that their stations and processing centers were holding more than 7,000 illegal immigrants, and that is just one Border Patrol sector. In a recent television interview, Acting DHS Secretary Kevin McAleenan accurately described these facilities as being similar to police stations. Suffice it to say that CBP does not have the facilities or resources to manage that many people in a police station-like environment.

If you think that sounds pretty grim, just wait because it gets worse. We aren't only overwhelmed by the number of individuals coming across the border but by the types of people who are arriving. I am talking about children and families who are mostly from Central America. We were told that, all told, Border Patrol encounters, in a given year, individuals from 140 different countries.

Since the criminal organizations that smuggle people into the United States are open for business, they are more than happy to take a Bangladeshi, a Yemeni, somebody from Iraq or from Afghanistan or, for that matter, from Iran and bring them across the border into the United States.

When our detention facilities were built, they were designed to hold single adults for a short duration, which used to account for the majority of people apprehended. That is simply not the case anymore. The human smugglers and criminal organizations that charge \$5,000, \$6,000, \$7,000 a head to bring people into the United States have studied our laws and have learned how to exploit the loopholes and the gaps. That

is why the composition of these migrants has changed so much over the years from single adults to children and to families.

In April, 68 percent of those apprehended were either families or unaccompanied children. This has put the Border Patrol in a very awkward position. Chief Provost noticed that her agents were spending now about 40 percent of their time processing migrants and providing care and transportation. She had a picture—a chart—that she demonstrated with a Border Patrol agent nursing a baby with a bottle and another Border Patrol agent cradling an infant in his arms. In other words, instead of being on the frontlines against illegal drugs coming across our border—which contributed to the deaths of 70,000 Americans last year alone and where 90 percent of the heroin and synthetic opioids known as fentanyl come principally from Mexico—instead of fighting that scourge and stopping that poison from coming into the United States, our Border Patrol has now been diverted to being, essentially, a childcare center handing out juice boxes and diapers. They aren't processing or stopping illegal immigrants or the human traffickers.

Trying to deal with these record high numbers, we know that the numbers of people coming across are far exceeding the resources available for the Border Patrol. With so many more people to process and more manpower needed, the Border Patrol has been taken off the line, leaving areas of the border vulnerable to exploitation by human smugglers and drug cartels.

Think about it. If you are a leader of a drug cartel trying to move heroin, methamphetamine, fentanyl, or other illegal drugs into the United States, why wouldn't you try to flood the Border Patrol with children and families so they would be taken off the line and distracted to take care of these individuals, as opposed to stopping those drugs? Of course, this is part of a larger plan.

Unfortunately, the Congress is doing little, if anything, about it. I don't think it takes an expert to see that things are bad, and I hope my colleagues can recognize that we need to act before they get worse. This is a problem that the President can't solve on his own and the Border Patrol can't solve on its own. This is about the legal authorities that the U.S. Government has to deal with this chaos and this humanitarian crisis at our own border. It takes a change in laws passed by Congress. So we must act on a bipartisan and bicameral basis to respond or this is going to get worse and worse.

Yesterday Chief Provost compared the current situation to holding a bucket under a faucet. It doesn't matter how many buckets you have if you never turn the water off. Well, that is what we need to do—stop the flow of people trying to enter our country illegally.

Last week, Congressman HENRY CUELLAR—my friend, a Democrat from Laredo, TX—and I introduced a bill called the HUMANE Act, which would at least slow that faucet to a drip and provide serious relief for the personnel who serve along the border. It focuses on the problems posed by high numbers of unaccompanied children and families, whom we do not have the capacity to adequately care for. It requires the Department of Homeland Security to keep families together through court proceedings—something we all should agree to—and provides safeguards to prevent children from being placed in the custody of dangerous individuals—sex offenders, human traffickers, and the like.

It also requires the Department of Homeland Security to establish regional processing centers in high traffic areas and to improve the processing of humanitarian relief claims by requiring those to be processed at ports of entry.

Finally, it mandates the hiring of 600 new CBP personnel to alleviate the personnel strain and get more of these highly trained men and women back on the frontlines. I hope we will have the opportunity to review this legislation soon in the Judiciary Committee. Chairman GRAHAM has told me he is willing to do that, and I hope our friends in the House will take it up soon.

America would never think of sending our men and women in the military to war without providing them the training, the equipment, and the support they need in order to fight and win our Nation's wars. Yet somehow we have sent the Border Patrol into a battle that is designed for failure. They simply don't have the numbers. They don't have the resources. We don't have the facilities in order to deal with this. We can't just try to staunch the flow while it gets worse and worse and worse and worse. Instead of putting another bucket under the faucet as it runs wide open, we need to turn that faucet off, and the only way we can do that is by Congress acting. It is on us, and we must act and act soon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

#### PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise in celebration of Public Service Recognition Week, a time to honor public servants at all levels of government for their dedication and outstanding service to this Nation. Since 2010, I have taken to the Senate floor to honor our particularly noteworthy government employees—a tradition that was first begun by my good friend Senator Ted Kaufman.

Today and during this week, I would like to continue this tradition by highlighting the contributions of three Virginians who have worked tirelessly to improve the functioning of our government and advance America's interests at home and abroad.

#### TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL KOZAK

Mr. President, I would like to first recognize Ambassador Michael Kozak from Arlington. Ambassador Kozak currently serves as Senior Bureau Official at the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. When I first read this, I did a double-take because Ambassador Kozak's remarkable career at State spans 47 years and nine Presidents.

Throughout his accomplished career, Ambassador Kozak has been a steadfast advocate for democracy and human rights abroad, serving at the forefront of many historical negotiations. During the seventies and eighties, he played a key role in negotiating the Panama Canal and Egypt-Israel peace treaties. In the 1990s, as chief of mission in Havana, he led the talks with senior officials from Fidel Castro's regime in Cuba before his appointment as Ambassador to Belarus.

Throughout his career, Ambassador Kozak has worked to combat anti-Semitism and promote human rights, and his work has been instrumental to promoting global peace and U.S. interests abroad.

Thank you, Ambassador Kozak.

#### TRIBUTE TO KARA DE CASTRO

Mr. President, next I would like to recognize Kara De Castro from Haymarket, VA. Through her work at the National Nuclear Security Administration, Ms. De Castro has led crucial programs to reduce one of our Nation's most significant national security threats—nuclear proliferation. Ms. De Castro has been instrumental in developing a "nuclear security culture" that is focused on the proper handling and use of nuclear materials. She is an Army veteran, and the Russian language training she received in the military has been put to good use through her work in the former Soviet Union. These efforts have led to the downgrading of 17 metric tons of highly enriched uranium, the equivalent of 446 nuclear weapons.

I thank Ms. De Castro for making the world a safer place.

#### TRIBUTE TO JOHN WAGNER

Finally, Mr. President, I want to recognize John Wagner from Ashburn, who serves as Deputy Executive Assistant Commissioner of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. For those of you who might actually follow some of this and are keeping score at home, John's name might sound familiar. He has been recognized before, including by me on this floor, for strengthening the passport control process through the Global Entry Trusted Traveler Program and the Automated Passport Control Program, which are widely familiar to many international travelers. That alone would have been enough to gain recognition and be good enough for a whole career.

Since then, John has spearheaded facial recognition systems at several major U.S. airports, which offer a fast and paperless method of screening incoming and outgoing travelers. To

date, the software has identified 45 fraudulent travel documents and approximately 7,000 visa overstays.

These innovative processes conceived by Mr. Wagner have increased the efficiency, minimized costs, and allowed CBP officers to focus on keeping our country safe.

I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating Ambassador Kozak, Ms. De Castro, and Mr. Wagner and thanking them for their great work.

#### FEDERAL WORKERS

In closing, Mr. President, I am going to say a few words about the way our Federal workers have been treated, unfortunately, during this administration. The truth is, the service of Federal workers like Ambassador Kozak, Ms. De Castro, and Mr. Wagner have not been honored by the President. Instead of appreciation, our Federal employees have too often faced complete disrespect in the form of pay freezes, hostile Executive orders, and of course the President's own disastrous government shutdown. During that 35-day, self-inflicted crisis, thousands of Federal workers went without pay. It is true that after we reopened they got that backpay, but during that tenure when they couldn't make their bills, oftentimes folks had to get out of daycare and couldn't get to the doctor. The stories we heard were remarkable. One survey found that more than half of all Federal workers dipped into savings to make ends meet. Those who weren't furloughed workers worked long hours in stressful and thinly staffed circumstances for weeks on end.

Candidly, I fear that the President's efforts to antagonize the Federal workforce is discouraging the best and brightest from serving in our government—at a time when nearly one-third of our Federal workers are nearing retirement age. This is wrong; it is unsustainable; and as a former CEO, these are just not good business practices, as well as the taxpayers will suffer from the consequences of this President's actions.

Our public servants are not bargaining chips. They are not faceless bureaucrats. They are our fellow Americans who dedicate their lives to serving their country, to protecting its people, and to making sure our tax dollars are properly spent.

Finally, I want to say, again, thank you to all our Federal workers. You deserve much better than what you have had the last couple of years. I will continue fighting in the Senate to protect your pay, your benefits, and your ability to continue to focus on what you signed up for—serving our country and its people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Park nomination?

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 41, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 106 Ex.]

#### YEAS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Portman
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blunt	Grassley	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Cramer	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Cruz	McSally	Wicker
Daines	Murkowski	Young
Enzi	Paul	
Ernst	Perdue	

#### NAYS—41

Baldwin	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Jones	Sanders
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Carper	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Casey	Leahy	Smith
Coons	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markley	Tester
Duckworth	Menendez	Van Hollen
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden
Heinrich	Reed	

#### NOT VOTING—7

Bennet	Harris	Udall
Booker	Moran	
Cardin	Sinema	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 25.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Michael J. Truncale, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Michael J. Truncale, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

Mitch McConnell, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, Todd Young, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Steve Daines, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 202.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Kenneth Kiyul Lee, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Kenneth Kiyul Lee, of California,

to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, Chuck Grassley, James E. Risch, Johnny Isakson, John Barrasso, Steve Daines, David Perdue, Roger F. Wicker, Jerry Moran, John Cornyn, John Thune, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Lindsey Graham, Shelley Moore Capito.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

##### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 24.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Wendy Vitter, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

##### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

##### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Wendy Vitter, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

Mitch McConnell, James E. Risch, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, David Perdue, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, John Thune, John Hoeven, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, Steve Daines, John Kennedy.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

##### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 221.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Brian J. Bulatao, of Texas, to be an Under Secretary of State (Management).

##### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

##### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Brian J. Bulatao, of Texas, to be an Under Secretary of State (Management).

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Steve Daines, James E. Risch, Roy Blunt, Tim Scott, Mike Rounds, David Perdue, Mike Crapo, John Thune, John Hoeven, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Pat Roberts, John Kennedy, Thom Tillis, John Cornyn.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

##### TRIBUTE TO MIKE HACKLEY AND RECOGNIZING BBQGUYS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I rise as a Member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship to highlight a veteran-owned Louisiana business that is a true success story. With me today is my colleague from my office, Ms. Cassie Leonard.

We all know small businesses are how many Americans live the American dream. They start small; they start with a passion; they create jobs; and then they help us compete globally in America and spark innovation. These American small business owners are often our friends. They are often our neighbors.

They succeed through the hard work of entrepreneurs like Mr. Mike Hackley of Baton Rouge. I am talking about Mike and his business BBQGuys because it is National Small Business Week and because BBQGuys was named Senate Small Business of the Week just last week.

Mike has served our country in many ways. He has served our country in the Air Force for more than 10 years. Once his military career ended, he worked in a number of different sectors. Like a lot of Louisianans, Mike loves the outdoors. In Louisiana, we will barbecue no matter how hot it gets outside.

Mike turned his passion into a profession, and he did it by starting an outdoor business called The Grill Store & More.

Early on, being the perceptive business person he is, Mike saw an opening with e-commerce, something we take for granted today. He launched a

website called [www.bbqguys.com](http://www.bbqguys.com), and he did this in 2001, 18 years ago, when Americans who did have the internet were on dial-up connections.

Today, 18 years later, BBQGuys is a giant in outdoor living online retailers. Mike now employs nearly 300 workers. He started with less than 10. That is the American dream. That is American success, and BBQGuys continues to evolve and to grow.

They started designing and manufacturing premium barbecue grills, with manufacturing operations here in the United States, and they are looking to export into Europe and Australia.

Mike also remains committed to a culture of teamwork at BBQGuys. Every day he makes a point of going around the office to say good morning to his employees, and I am not talking about just to the executives. It is no wonder Mike has a high employee retention rate, a reputation for outstanding customer service, and an A-plus rating from the Better Business Bureau. BBQGuys has also been named one of the 5,000 fastest growing businesses in the United States by Inc. Magazine for 11 years in a row.

I am proud to stand today before the U.S. Senate to say I am proud of Mike Hackley. I am proud of what he has built. He is realizing the American dream, and he is creating good jobs for my State.

Mike, if you are listening, thank you for making Louisiana proud.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

##### 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GOLDEN SPIKE

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, on May 10, 1869, a golden spike was driven into the last link joining the rails of the first transcontinental railroad at Promontory Summit, UT. Made of 17-carat gold and driven into a predrilled hole in the very last ceremonial tie, it bore the inscription: "May God continue the unity of our country as this railroad unites the two great oceans of the world." Indeed, it did, with the joining of the Union Pacific Railroad, stretching from the Missouri River near the Iowa-Nebraska border, and the Central Pacific Railroad, stretching from Sacramento, CA—east met west. The United States became truly united.

As the spike was struck, a telegraph was sent around the Nation, and bells rang out from coast to coast. This moment, you see, gave lots of people throughout the United States and lots of people in my State of Utah in particular access to what they needed to grow, to thrive, to prosper, to feed their families; that is, access to other people.

Throughout the history of humanity, people have needed access to other people. That is why great civilizations have sprung up along great rivers and in areas where they had access to an ocean port. It is one of the reasons why, throughout much of history, people in land-locked regions of any country, including our own, very often have a hard time making a living. The introduction of the railroad started to help to change that.

Tomorrow marks the 150th anniversary of this pivotal moment, and so it is only right that we pause for just a minute to recognize it, for this was a moment that changed the course of history in Utah and in our Nation and ultimately the entire world. With the driving of that golden spike, the arduous 6-month journey that used to be required to cross the country—costing \$1,000—had become a mere 10-day trip costing only \$150.

Thousands of miles of tracks were laid across the country, allowing people to migrate west and to establish new settlements far more quickly, safely, and easily. It transformed the economy across Utah and throughout the Nation. Goods became efficiently transported across much farther distances. Settlers found new markets, and buyers on the frontier and in rural areas were able to purchase items that had previously been completely unavailable to them in some cases or at least very difficult to obtain. It spurred a boon in communications, commerce, agriculture, construction, and mining. It started a significant new chapter in our relationship with Asia and the Pacific region, and it served as a model of innovation and prosperity for the rest of the world.

All of this came about, it is important to note, from the perseverance and efforts of many different people from different walks of life working together. It required a clear-eyed vision from President Lincoln and the Federal Government and a fruitful private-public partnership that allowed the engineers, railroad companies, and local communities the freedom to do their jobs and to do them well and without undo interference. It would not have been possible without the work of the Chinese, Irish, Mormons, Civil War veterans, Native Americans, and countless other laborers who toiled so long and so hard with such a clear devotion to build these railroads.

Most of this is, of course, in the history books, as well it ought to be. Most of us have a sense of the enormous achievement this moment represented some 150 years ago tomorrow, of the great impact it had on our Nation and the legacy it has left behind for us and for our posterity. But what we often do not know are some of the stories of the ordinary men and women behind these achievements and the ones who have worked so hard to preserve this great legacy. There are, in fact, hidden heroes who make history and unseen efforts of people who worked so hard to

keep that history alive. The doors of history sometimes turn on small and often unseen hinges, and so I would like to take a moment to honor a few of those people today who helped move history forward.

Some of us might know the name of Theodore Judah—a railroad and civil engineer who was key to the original idea and design of connecting these railroads and who advocated for the so-called Central Route for the first transcontinental railroad, the Central Route marked in red in this picture. But less familiar is the name of Theodore's wife, Anna Judah.

While many routes were surveyed as possible paths for the railroad, Theodore Judah had an often-scoffed-at dream of laying rails through the mountains of the Sierra Nevada, from California going eastward. Anna Judah shared Theodore's dream of connecting the first transcontinental railroad. When Theodore hiked and surveyed the Sierra Nevadas, Anna hiked and worked right alongside of him. She sketched and did water colors and even oil paintings of the terrain, plants, and the foliage. She gathered and labeled the various fossils and minerals. She took copious notes all the while, taking into account different things she and her husband observed as they were traveling.

After their time in the Sierra Nevadas, Theodore and Anna, like Brigham Young, knew: This is the place. Together they fell in love with the idea of the railroad taking the Central Route across the Sierra Nevadas, believing that it would provide the perfect path for what they wanted to accomplish. So they began traveling back and forth from California, dedicating their efforts to lobbying for their dream in Washington.

Anna was sharp, charming, tenacious, and undoubtedly she was Theodore's biggest booster. She had the idea to display an exhibit right here in the Capitol showcasing her notes and her clippings from their travels in the area, her drawings and her paintings, samples of mineral and ore she had collected, and charts and graphs that she was able to present in a way that made them understandable to laymen, that helped other people understand why this area was so important and the significant role it could play in our Nation's development.

Literally hundreds of Senators, Congressmen, lobbyists, and government clerks visited her display, which helped convince the eastern legislators of the beauty of the western mountains—which many of them had never seen or at least not experienced anything like the way she had—and turned their hearts to the possibility of building a railroad over them and through them to unite a country.

Ultimately, Congress was persuaded—to everyone's benefit—to choose Judah's proposal for the Central Route and did so in large part because of Anna Judah's efforts.

Tragically, Anna's husband Theodore contracted yellow fever. As a result, he died before seeing the railroad completed and, in fact, even before the project was started in earnest. But Anna lived to see their dream to fruition. In fact, the driving of the last spike took place on what would have been the couple's 22nd wedding anniversary. On the date of the ceremony, Anna visited her husband's grave, and she wrote that there her husband's spirit—so long dedicated to the railroad—felt somehow near to her once again.

Years later, another young woman fell in love with the history of the Golden Spike and the beginning of the first transcontinental railroad. Bernice Gibbs Anderson, known to some as the Mother of the Golden Spike, was born in Colorado in 1900 and lived the majority of her life in Corinne, UT.

As a little girl, Bernice helped trail cattle near Promontory Summit and grew up hearing cowboy stories around the campfire, including stories about the Golden Spike, and, as her granddaughter put it, "She just plain fell in love with it." From the time she was 19 up until the moment of her death, she tirelessly dedicated her life to recognizing and preserving the history surrounding Golden Spike.

Bernice conceived the idea that the area around Promontory Summit ought to be set aside to commemorate the completion of the transcontinental railroad. For years, she campaigned to make Promontory Summit a national historic monument.

She visited countless legislators, Governors, commissioners, and railroad officers to raise support and raise funds for a monument at Promontory Summit.

A mother of six children, she also worked as a correspondent and as a staff writer for the Salt Lake Tribune, where she wrote historic articles and poetry about the Golden Spike. She sent letters and invitations to Members of Congress, U.S. Presidents, and Park Service officials—all in hopes that they might come to recognize the importance of the site.

As President of the Golden Spike Association, she coordinated reenactment ceremonies and anniversary programs, encouraging local communities to participate in those celebrations every year. While some viewed her mission as somewhat unimportant—or, at least, less important than other things—and, therefore, dismissed her efforts, she never gave up.

Thankfully, Bernice lived to see the fruits of her labors. After years of devoting her life to this cause, Promontory Summit was declared a national historic site on July 30, 1965. Just this past March, it was redesignated as a national historic park—the first in Utah—allowing even more of the railroad and the surrounding area to be preserved for history going forward.

Fast forward to 2019. We now reached the 150th anniversary of the Golden



Spike. Today, another dedicated woman has been behind its sesquicentennial celebration, Spike 150. Aimee McConkie, carrying the banner previously carried by Anna Judah and Bernice Gibbs Anderson, has been a driving force in our State and in her community. A BYU graduate, a wife, and mother of four daughters, Aimee has worked for 15 years in professional association management.

In 2005 she founded Utah Venture Outdoors, a summer festival series in Millcreek, UT. For 14 years, she volunteered her time and her resources to this event, seeking to bring the community together through recreational opportunities.

In 2017 she also launched LABELED, a 4-day film festival that seeks to break the stigma around mental health issues. Now she has once again brought her community together for an important cause—this time, to celebrate and commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike.

Under her leadership as director of Spike 150, there are events taking place not only around Promontory Summit but also around the entire State of Utah—events to highlight the history and legacy of the Golden Spike, events for children and families, and events for music, art, and train enthusiasts.

It has taken tremendous amounts of organization, coordination, and perseverance, and it would no doubt make Bernice Gibbs Anderson proud. At the 1957 celebration of the Golden Spike, she said:

This is sacred soil, dedicated to the sacrifices of the thousands who labored in the great race to build the first transcontinental railway in the shortest possible time. . . . The destiny of this nation rode triumphant upon the rails that met at Promontory Station! The future of this site depends on you, my friends. Will it take its rightful place in the heritage and traditions of America . . . or will it remain desolate and forgotten to sink into oblivion[?]

Thanks to the work of people like Aimee McConkie, we know that the Golden Spike will not sink into oblivion but will indeed take its rightful place in history.

Anna Judah, Bernice Gibbs Anderson, and Aimee McConkie might have lived at different times, but there is a common thread that runs throughout their stories: the triumph of ordinary people, of the hidden heroes behind so many of our great achievements in history.

Without the work of these ordinary Americans and Utahns, we never could have achieved one of the most transformative events in our Nation thus far: the driving of the Golden Spike and the completion of the first transcontinental railroad. And without the work of these hidden heroes, we could never reasonably hope and expect to be able to keep this legacy alive.

It is our task now to take up the banner that these women have carried—the banner of innovation, perseverance, and unity—and to ensure that our remarkable heritage lives on. If we do, there is no telling what Utah and our great Nation can achieve together.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). The Senator from Tennessee.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I wanted to spend just a few minutes today speaking with my colleagues and also with Tennesseans about an issue that we hear so very much about every single day. The issue continues to persist. It is our border, and we all know—and, indeed, you read in news count after news count—that yes, indeed, there is a crisis at our border.

Just a few months ago, we had some of our friends who are in the other Chamber who kept saying: Oh, this is manufactured; oh, there is nothing to it.

But as we hear from law enforcement professionals, as we hear from ICE, from DHS, and from the Border Patrol, we have a crisis. Our border is strained to the breaking point.

The real humanitarian crisis at the border is escalating. There are people who are being brought in through Central America, through Mexico, and they are stranded in the desert without food and without water. During the summer, sometimes you have temperatures above 100 degrees.

Our border is at a breaking point, and it is, indeed, time for this body to do something about it and to support these Agencies that are on the front-line dealing with this crisis every single day.

What we know from our hearing that we held yesterday at the Senate Judiciary Committee is that ICE is facing mounting challenges when it comes to expediting the deportations that need to take place. Abuse and exploitation of the asylum process overburdens our court system as illegal immigrants flood our borders claiming persecution.

Our country historically welcomes people who are fleeing political persecution, but there have to be tighter rules on these asylum seekers. The percentage of those who have valid asylum claims is actually relatively low compared to the number who are applying for these protections. I will tell you that I welcome President Trump's moves to raise the standards.

Last week, the President directed the Department of Homeland Security to enact several new asylum changes. As part of these new policies, the President imposed a new deadline for the immigration courts to meet. He directed that cases in immigration courts be settled within 180 days of those being filed.

Tennesseans want to see government accountability. They want to see it across every Agency. Certainly, when it comes to immigration policy, they want this accountability. They know that with a 6-month deadline, it is exactly the kind of accountability that is needed.

Here is the problem that ICE is facing when it comes to meeting that 180-day standard. Right now, as of yester-

day at our hearing, they had more than 800,000 cases that were pending. Think about that. Your court system has 800,000 cases that are pending. There are exactly 400 immigration judges that are there to hear these 800,000 cases. Do the math on that. Think about how many cases that would be.

It is a 2-year wait at this point to get the case heard. So ICE needs additional judges. That means they need additional officers, and that means they need additional funding in order to meet the load.

I asked Director Asher how long it would take them to ramp up in order to be able to hear these 800,000 cases. She said: months, maybe a year, maybe a little bit longer. It depends on when they get the authorization to expand the court system. It depends on when they get the funding for it.

All of this time, what continues to happen? Cases continue to be piled onto that backlog. If we took action today, and if we approved their ability to expand their capacity to have more judges, to have more agents, to have more officers, and to have more resources, it would be a year by the time we worked through this process. It might be as many as 1.5 million cases that they are working on.

This is one of the reasons that it is imperative that we close some of the loopholes that are being used in the asylum process and work through closing these loopholes to help secure this border. It is something that would be of assistance to those who are trying to meet the need that is there from people crushing our border, putting that foot on American soil, and claiming asylum and persecution.

Another thing we talked about in yesterday's hearing is trafficking. We all know that cartels are big business. Cartels deal in trafficking drugs. They deal in trafficking human beings, which is disgusting, and they look at human beings to move them for labor trafficking, for sex trafficking, and for gangs. They look at that as part of their business.

I know Senator CRUZ talked about his EL CHAPO Act, which would allow those seized assets from these drug lords to be used to help pay to secure that border, because stopping this trafficking is something that is an imperative. It really is true that until we secure this southern border every town is, in essence, a border town and every State is a border State because illegal immigration no longer is a problem that is confined to those States that are on the border. We see this all across our country, and it is heart-breaking—you talk about the trafficking of human beings, the sex trafficking, and the effect that has on girls, when you talk about the drug trafficking and the heartbreaking effects that has on families in every single one of our communities. Opioids, fentanyl, heroin—we all see it.

God bless our local law enforcement. Next week we are going to honor our



law enforcement, but God bless them for the work they do in our communities. Here is a good example. Just this past January, our Customs and Border Patrol seized the largest amount of fentanyl in the agency's history ever—largest amount. They seized nearly 254 pounds of fentanyl from a Mexican national trying to enter the United States. It was enough to kill more than 115 million people. That is the volume that 1 person was bringing over—enough fentanyl to kill 115 million people. This is why we have to make certain we secure that border.

As I mentioned, the trafficking of human beings is taking place. Another of the problems is that many adult sponsors who are seeking custody of children are here illegally themselves. The traffickers have adults grab a child; they are coming to the border. The child is then transferred to someone else in the country, and that individual is here illegally. It is difficult to find out how that child is connected to the adult they are taken to. Sometimes it could be a labor gang. Sometimes it could be a prostitution ring. We don't know. I commend the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, which are taking steps to close a big loophole here. Last April, the two agencies entered into an agreement to ensure that relatives of these children are not above the law. Under the agreement, DHS and HHS promised to share information about these adult sponsors so that ICE can run criminal and immigration background checks on them. This agreement is a powerful tool in the fight to stop trafficking of migrant children. So long as law enforcement can keep running these criminal background checks on these sponsors, we can hold more adults accountable and keep these children safe.

Finally, I want to touch on the wall because Border Patrol Chief Provost told me during the hearing yesterday that the wall was working. The San Diego sector has 14 miles of the new double fencing that has been approved by Congress. It is the first of the sections of the new wall. Previously, some of the old walls were 6 feet high, and they were made out of landing mats, and they were not successful in deterring illegal entry. The new walls are 30 feet high, and they stand on steel bollards. The barrier is making it tougher for illegal immigrants to sneak across, and it is helping our agents. Our agents have told us repeatedly—not for the last few months or the last couple of years but, get this, for 20 years—for 20 years, they have said we need three things: We need a barrier; we need better technology; and we need more agents and officers on the ground.

These men and women deserve our best efforts, and we should be giving them what they need. Our immigration system is full of legal loopholes and physical vulnerabilities. I applaud the President's new asylum changes, and I

urge each of my colleagues to support law enforcement's needs. They are consistent in asking for these three things—barriers, technology, and agents. This is what they need in order to help keep our Nation safe.

So as we consider how much we value our safe communities, how much we want our communities to be safe and happy and prosperous, I encourage each of us to think about these agents who are working to protect that southern border, to deal with human trafficking, to deal with sex trafficking, and to keep illegal drugs off our streets.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

### VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. HARRIS. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent but, had I been present, would have voted no on roll-call vote No. 117, the confirmation of Michael H. Park, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.●

### NOMINATIONS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today I wish to express my opposition to recent nominees who have come before the Senate.

First, I would like to express my opposition to the nomination of Janet Dhillon, who was confirmed to serve as Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, EEOC, by a party line vote yesterday. The EEOC has a critical mission to enforce the Federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against workers on the basis of their race, religion, national origin, or disability, and it was the first Federal agency to take the position that title VII of the Civil Rights Act protects employees from workplace discrimination based on their sexual orientation. Like many of my colleagues, I am concerned that Ms. Dhillon has refused to commit to uphold the EEOC's current interpretation of title VII as covering LGBTQ workers. I am also concerned by arguments that were made in legal briefs by the Retail Litigation Center under Ms. Dhillon's leadership, including arguments in support of policies to

make it more difficult for employers to be held liable for harassment. It is for these reasons that I would not have voted in support of Ms. Dhillon's nomination.

I also want to comment on my opposition to Cheryl Stanton's nomination to serve as Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division at the Department of Labor. Before Ms. Stanton's nomination, she served as executive director of the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, in which capacity she garnished wages to collect unemployment insurance overpayments and had a public dispute with a staff member who refused to institute a personnel action after raising ethical objections. I voted against invoking cloture on Ms. Stanton's nomination and would have voted against her confirmation.

Finally, I want to address the nomination of Joseph Bianco for the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, which I opposed in the Judiciary Committee due to concerns regarding his record on such critical issues as privacy and civil liberties. I am also concerned that the Senate advanced Judge Bianco's nomination even though neither home State Senator returned a positive blue slip.

Thank you.

### CONFIRMATION OF JANET DHILLON

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I opposed the confirmation of Janet Dhillon to Chair the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The EEOC is an independent Federal agency with an absolutely vital mission: enforcing Federal laws against employment discrimination. But Ms. Dhillon has spent her career protecting corporations that are accused of discrimination by their workers.

As a leader of the Retail Litigation Center, she advocated legal positions designed to undermine workplace protections, especially low-income women and women of color.

The Retail Litigation Center helped defend Walmart against wage discrimination claims filed by 1.6 million women who worked at Walmart. In doing so, they managed to convince the Supreme Court to raise the legal barriers for all workers to bring discrimination claims.

In a different case, this one involving racial harassment against an African-American woman, the Retail Litigation Center convinced the Supreme Court to narrow the legal definition of a supervisor. This means that workers are now less able to hold their employers accountable for workplace harassment.

Both of these were 5-4 decisions that were supported by only the Republican Justices on the Supreme Court.

All workers need an EEOC that is looking out for them, but Ms. Dhillon's nomination to Chair the EEOC is yet another way that the Trump administration keeps rigging the system for

their corporate allies and stacking the deck against working people.

## HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT TRAVIS W. ATKINS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, in honor of National Military Appreciation Month, I want to recognize a Montana hero, Medal of Honor Recipient SSG Travis W. Atkins of Bozeman, Montana and the Nation are eternally grateful for the sacrifice he made to protect his fellow soldiers and his country. His memory will live on in the hearts of all Montanans for years to come.

I ask unanimous consent that a poem penned in his honor by Albert Carey Caswell be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

### THE GREATER GOOD

The Greater Good . . .  
 In all you could . . .  
 Oh what would?  
 What would you do?  
 In honor should . . .  
 All in that moment of truth . . .  
 As there lies the truth . . .  
 So lies the proof . . .  
 In life and death . . .  
 When courage crest's . . .  
 To give all that you have left . . .  
 All in your most heroic quests . . .  
 As so surely lies our very best . . .  
 Our world shall bless . . .  
 Goodness . . . Evil . . . Darkness . . . Light  
 . . .  
 Those Brave Hearts who evil must fight . . .  
 Who bring the light . . .  
 But, for the greater good . . .  
 To fight the darkness as Travis you so would  
 . . .  
 And what child may be born . . .  
 From a future love you saved which may live  
 on . . .  
 Who might save the world or touch hearts oh  
 so warm . . .  
 For only the future tells . . .  
 For only our Lord knows so well . . .  
 As you Travis showed us all how future An-  
 gels are born . . .  
 All in honor's code . . .  
 As you so bore the load . . .  
 With all your splendid splendor so . . .  
 As we now so weep . . .  
 As your family and your Brothers In Arms  
 will always keep . . .  
 Your most gallant memory in their hearts so  
 deep . . .  
 My son, your battle is over now . . .  
 But, your new one is about . . .  
 Is about to begin my friend . . .  
 As an Angel in The Army of Our Lord, time  
 and again . . .  
 As you will watch over us my friend . . .  
 And in Montana when there comes a gentle  
 . . .  
 Our Lord's tears shall wash down upon your  
 loved ones to ease their pain . . .  
 Until, one fine day once again . . .  
 Up in heaven you'll meet then . . .  
 And you won't have to cry no more . . .  
 At Ease . . .  
 As a new Angel rises up to heaven to bless  
 . . .  
 As now we lay your fine body down to  
 rest . . .  
 Who but For The Greater Good all of us so  
 blessed . . .  
 Amen . . .

## HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT CHRISTOPHER SLUTMAN

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to an American hero and patriot who was taken from us far too soon. Earlier this month, I was standing in the flight line at the Dover Air Force Base alongside Congresswoman LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER and Senator CHRIS COONS. We were there to receive the remains of three marines killed in action on April 8, 2019, when a roadside bomb went off in Afghanistan. Two of the servicemembers killed were Active Duty: Cpl Robert A. Hendriks, of Long Island, NY, and SSgt Benjamin S. Hines of York County, PA.

There was a third: SSgt Christopher Slutman, a Reservist, a 15-year member of the New York City Fire Department, and a Delawarean. The 43-year-old U.S. Marine was also a loving husband to his wife Shannon and father to three daughters: McKenna, Kenley, and Weslynn. In life and in death, Staff Sergeant Slutman epitomized the best of America. He selflessly put his life on the line to protect and serve his country and his community.

It was Winston Churchill who once said, "The reservist is twice the citizen." By that measure, Christopher Slutman was three times the citizen. He wore two uniforms in service to our Nation. He was staff sergeant in the U.S. Marines, serving in the 25th Marine Regiment, Fourth Marine Division in the Marine Forces Reserve, based in Harrisburg, PA. He was also a decorated 15-year veteran of the New York City Fire Department.

Friends say that Christopher always dreamed of being a firefighter. He grew up in Maryland and graduated from Frederick Douglass High School, where he played football, baseball, and wrestled and achieved Eagle Scout status. Eventually, he volunteered with fire departments in Maryland and Washington, DC. Most recently, he split his time between the Bronx and Wilmington, DE. Most days, I ride down to Washington, DC, from my home in Wilmington to do my job. Staff Sergeant Slutman took the train the opposite direction to do his job. He so wanted to serve that he would travel from his home in Delaware to Ladder Company 27 in New York City. In fact, he was on military leave from Ladder Company 27 and nearing the end of his most recent deployment with the Marine Reserves in Afghanistan when he and two comrades lost their lives.

It was Slutman's work in the Bronx where, in 2014, he won the Fire Chiefs Association Memorial Medal for rescuing an unconscious woman from the seventh floor of a high-rise apartment building.

Scripture tells us in John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." Staff Sergeant Slutman lived that kind of profound love: dedicating his life to serving others, even at his own peril, and it seems that this kind of selfless-

ness and devotion to service was a hallmark of the Slutman household. Staff Sergeant Slutman is survived by three brothers. One of his brothers is in the Marines, another in the Army. The third is a firefighter in Washington, DC. Their father is an Army veteran and was a volunteer firefighter, as was Slutman's mother. Here is a family who has, and continues to, truly give of themselves in service of others.

Last Friday, I was honored to have been able to join Staff Sergeant Slutman's family, friends, and fellow servicemembers in New York City to pay our respects to a man who gave his life for this country. The first speaker at his funeral was Marine SgtMaj Christopher Armstrong, who served alongside his friend Chris for 8 years. Armstrong remembered his friend with these words. He said, "Upon joining the unit, I began observing the Marines; who they watched, how they looked at their leaders, and what they said. There were a small number of men that when they spoke, silence fell; when they issued an order, the response was immediate; and when they were looked upon, it was with reverence. Christopher Slutman immediately stood out as a leader who was respected and admired. He didn't pound his chest, he didn't try to impress or go on about what he was going to do. He just did it."

Armstrong continued. "He placed his Marines' welfare before his own, always. Chris never sought credit, but he always gave it."

FDNY Commissioner Dan Nigro also spoke. He described Slutman as "the type of American we can all be proud of." And he added, "Chris was a protector of those in danger, a defender to those who needed him, a rescuer to those who needed saving, and a leader who demonstrated his valor on every tour of duty both here and abroad."

It was a poet named Edgar Guest, who spent his life in Detroit, MI, and was often referred to as the People's Poet, who once said, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day." Christopher Slutman's life was a better lesson than any sermon. He demonstrated the absolute best of this country every day with his heroism and service to others. The way he lived his life and gave his life is a language that is clear to one and all.

It is with a heavy heart that I, along with the entire First State and the country, offer our sincerest condolences to his wife Shannon and his three girls. Their dad is an American hero. I, along with our Governor, John Carney, and Delaware's congressional delegation, promise you that he won't soon be forgotten, and I know that his legacy lives on in you.

### 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GOLDEN SPIKE

Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President, the Transcontinental Railroad is a testament to the enduring American spirit of industry and national unity.

On the precipice of the American Civil War, Utah's delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, William Henry Hooper, recognized that "A great band of Union throughout the family of man is a common interest." Hooper petitioned Congress in his belief that "a Central Road would unite that interest as with a chain of iron, and would effectually hold together our Federal union with an imperishable identity of mutual interest."

William Henry Hooper's letter to Congress would take several months to reach Washington, DC, as any westward travel beyond the Mississippi River required wagon, stagecoach, or horseback.

The U.S. Congress would, however, approve such an undertaking, and soon, a National Central Railroad began to manifest from the worn hands of laborers to execute a vision of national unity, a feat that would propel American power and change the course of our history.

These hands belonged to men of differing national origins and creeds, who labored together under one banner, often fleeing significant hardship in pursuit of economic opportunity in the American West. Roughly 15,000 Chinese immigrants, 10,000 Irish immigrants, and 4,000 Latter-day Saints joined the national effort to complete the most remarkable and ambitious engineering project of the 19th century.

On May 10, 1869, the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads formally met at Promontory Summit, UT, and the 17.6-carat golden spike officially linked the East and West Coasts, marking a watershed moment for American trade, commerce, and population.

A 6-month journey across the continent was reduced to 1 week. Within a decade of the railroad's completion, Salt Lake City's population more than doubled, further boosting Utah's significance in the national economy.

Brigham Young recognized the enormous opportunities that global trade would bring to Utah and the country and the abundant and yet untapped resources of iron, coal, stone, and timber.

In pursuit of a national railroad project, Brigham Young recognized that "mineral resources of California, and these mountains, will never be fully developed to the benefit of the people of the United States, without the construction of such a road, and upon its completion, the entire trade of China and the East Indies will pass through the heart of the Union; thereby giving our Citizens the almost entire controls of the Asiatic and Pacific trade."

Indeed, the Transcontinental Railroad would transform the American economy in profound ways. This achievement revolutionized communications, global trade routes, and allowed for the movement of people across the country at an unprecedented scale.

On the sesquicentennial of the completion of the Transcontinental Rail-

road at Promontory Summit, let us remember the sacrifice of those laborers who would not live to see to its conclusion, but whose contributions helped transform the Nation and the world.

The 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike is also a celebration of the limitless American imagination, spirit of ingenuity, and industry that made this incredible project a success.

Let us not forget the example these pioneers set for us as we go forward in a new era of challenges and opportunities.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ZZ TOP

• Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I recognize and congratulate the Texas blues rock band ZZ Top on their 50th anniversary. It is only fitting that this group kicks off their anniversary tour in their home State of Texas.

With plenty of gas in the tank, Dusty, Billy, Frank, and the rest of their crew will be traveling to more than 60 cities across 14 countries in their commemorative tour. An appropriate reminder of ZZ Top's history, this tour clearly shows they have been able to reach millions of fans across the globe for decades.

In 1969, two rival blues rock bands in Houston, TX—Billy's Moving Sidewalks and Frank and Dusty's American Blues—coalesced into one band, ZZ Top. Two years later, they dropped their first album, aptly titled, "ZZ Top's First Album."

Bandmates Billy Gibbons, Frank Beard, and Dusty Hill have been writing songs and creating a musical fusion between blues and southern rock since their formation and have never looked back. Though they draw inspiration from music greats like Jimi Hendrix, BB King, Cream, George Jones, and Texas blues guitarist Freddie King, all of their influences transform into one singularly unique sound.

In 1973, the band released its third album "Tres Hombres," which catapulted them to the national spotlight with the hit song "La Grange," still one of ZZ Top's signature songs.

ZZ Top's momentum and success built during its first decade culminated in the legendary 1976 tour entitled the World Wide Texas Tour, a production that included a longhorn, a buffalo, buzzards, rattlesnakes, and a Texas-shaped stage. If their tour wasn't proof enough that things are bigger in Texas, then maybe their record sales will convince you otherwise.

The band has sold over 50 million records worldwide, and their 1983 album "Eliminator," sold more than 10 million copies and included rock hit "Sharp Dressed Man."

"The Little Ol' Band From Texas" has played for millions of fans across the globe, Sweden to Australia, Japan to Germany. The band is among a select few to say they have toured the globe for half a century.

ZZ Top also lays undisputed claim to being the longest running major rock band with the original members intact. Their iconic beards, powerful rock anthems, dedication to music, and impressive artistic talent has sustained them as a perennial rock power, whose music will stand the test of time.

Over five decades of creating music, ZZ Top earned eight Top 40 hits on the Billboard Hot 100; six No. 1 mainstream rock hits; and ranked 44th on VH1's 2000 "100 Greatest Hard Rock Artists."

ZZ Top's accomplishments throughout the years culminated in their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2004, where they are recognized as some of the greatest rock artists in the world.

I congratulate Billy, Frank, and Dusty on their 50th anniversary and wish them luck as they embark on their year of touring around the world. •

#### RECOGNIZING BRUNOW CONTRACTING, LLC

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, it is my privilege to recognize a woman-owned small business that is dedicated to its customers, employees, and community. In honor of the U.S. Small Business Administration's National Small Business Week, it is my pleasure to name Brunow Contracting of Council Bluffs, IA, the Senate Small Business of the Day.

Brunow Contracting represents the story of a construction company with an unlikely founder. Tamara Brunow was a pre-law student at the College of Saint Mary who found herself working in construction. She began her career with an internship at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, in military contracting. It was in this role that she saw a future in construction and government contracts.

After her time at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, she proceeded to work for two other construction organizations, Oakview Construction and Lueder Construction. During her tenure with these firms, she realized that while she loved her jobs, she knew she wanted to be her own boss. This prompted her to launch Brunow Contracting in 2008. Shortly after her launch, Brunow Contracting acquired its first contract of \$1.3 million dollars to build a Presbyterian church.

Brunow Contracting specializes in government contracting and is certified by the Small Business Administration as an 8(a) and HUBZone business. Brunow Contracting has completed numerous contracts, ranging in value from \$800 to nearly \$5 million, and a client list which includes the City of Omaha, the U.S. Forest Service, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Southwest Iowa Planning Council, and the U.S. Coast Guard. These projects have included everything from churches, to water treatment plants, to data facilities for Facebook.

With dedication and determination, Ms. Brunow, successfully started a construction company as a single mother of three children in the middle of a recession. Now, she is the owner of one of the only woman-owned construction businesses in America, a recipient of the Midland Business Journal's 40 under 40, and a leader within her community. Today, Ms. Brunow has expanded her business reach to include serving as the head of H2W Apparel, a women's active wear company. Additionally, Ms. Brunow remains an active mentor for women entrepreneurs and advocate for female entrepreneurship.

Ms. Brunow embodies what it means to be an entrepreneur and small business owner. Despite those telling her that it is not the right industry or not the right time, Brunow Contracting quickly became a multimillion-dollar business with an A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau. Ms. Brunow showed that, while it certainly is not easy, it is possible to simultaneously build a business, be a great mother, volunteer as a mentor, and remain committed to your community. It is my distinct pleasure to honor Ms. Brunow and the entire team at Brunow Contracting as the Senate Small Business of the Day. You make Iowa proud, and I look forward to watching your continued growth and success.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1328. An act to establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1503. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act regarding the list under section 505(j)(7) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1520. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the publication of a list of licensed biological products, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6913, and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Ms. KAPTUR of Ohio, Mr. SUOZZI of New York, Mr. MALINOWSKI of New Jersey, Mr. MCADAMS of Utah, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. MAST of Florida.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1328. An act to establish the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 1503. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act regarding the

list under section 505(j)(7) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 1520. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the publication of a list of licensed biological products, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1254. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1255. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Electricity, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Review of Recent Cost-Benefit Studies Related to Net Metering and Distributed Solar"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1256. A communication from the Solicitor, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 8, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1257. A communication from the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2018 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1258. A communication from the Executive Director, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Seventy-Eighth Financial Statement for the period of October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1259. A communication from the Acting Deputy Solicitor, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 8, 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1260. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Annual Report on Disability-Related Air Travel Complaints Received During Calendar Year 2017"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. GRAHAM, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with amendments:

S. 820. A bill to strengthen programs authorized under the Debbie Smith Act of 2004.

By Mr. GRAHAM, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment:

S. 998. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to ex-

pand support for police officer family services, stress reduction, and suicide prevention, and for other purposes.

By Mr. GRAHAM, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with amendments:

S. 1231. A bill to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program.

#### EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. GRAHAM for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Attorney General.

Jeffrey Vincent Brown, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

Brantley Starr, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas.

Stephanie L. Haines, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Robert J. Colville, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Timothy J. Downing, of Oklahoma, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma for the term of four years.

William Travis Brown, Jr., of Louisiana, to be United States Marshal for the Middle District of Louisiana for the term of four years.

Michael Blaine East, of North Carolina, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of North Carolina for the term of four years.

By Mr. BURR for the Select Committee on Intelligence.

Christopher Scolese, of New York, to be Director of the National Reconnaissance Office.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 1381. A bill to modify the presumption of service connection for veterans who were exposed to herbicide agents while serving in the Armed Forces in Thailand during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 1382. A bill to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. MCSALLY):

S. 1383. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide a guarantee of residency for registration of businesses of spouses of members of the uniformed services, to improve occupational license portability for military spouses through interstate compacts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. ROMNEY (for himself and Mr. BRAUN):

S. 1384. A bill to reform prescription drug pricing and reduce out-of-pocket costs by ensuring consumers benefit from negotiated rebates; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KENNEDY:

S. 1385. A bill to prohibit the awarding of a contract or grant in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that the contractor or grantee has no seriously delinquent tax debts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HARRIS, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN)):

S. 1386. A bill to modify the requirements applicable to locatable minerals on public domain land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 1387. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to improve the service obligation verification process for TEACH Grant recipients, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 1388. A bill to manage supply chain risk through counterintelligence training, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1389. A bill to protect consumers from usury; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1390. A bill to require plans for military installations for full military funeral honors for veterans at such installations; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 1391. A bill to require reporting regarding certain drug price increases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 1392. A bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct an assessment of the responsibilities, workload, and vacancy rates of suicide prevention coordinators of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1393. A bill to prohibit Members of Congress from purchasing or selling certain investments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 1394. A bill to provide collective bargaining rights for public safety officers employed by States or their political subdivisions; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 1395. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the purchase of certain firearms by individuals under 21 years of

age, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1396. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of municipal solid waste; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. KING, Mr. BROWN, Mr. UDALL, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1397. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to provide for a national Federal write-in absentee ballot for domestic use; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 1398. A bill to promote the use of smart technologies and systems in communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 1399. A bill to amend title VIII of the Public Health Services Act to revise and extend nursing workforce development programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 1400. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to preserve the option of States to implement health care marketplaces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

S. 1401. A bill to establish eligibility requirements for education support professionals under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 1402. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to recognize employers with a commitment to helping employees balance workplace responsibilities and family obligations; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 1403. A bill to amend the Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program under the Higher Education Act of 1965; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 1404. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to address the increased burden that maintaining the health and hygiene of infants and toddlers places on families in need, the resultant adverse health effects on children and families, and the limited child care options available for infants and toddlers who lack sufficient diapers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 1405. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the credit for production of refined coal; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 1406. A bill to revise the boundaries of a unit of the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System in Topsail, North Carolina, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 1407. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to add definitions for the terms

"common carrier" and "personal operator", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 1408. A bill to amend the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 to improve child care protections provided through interstate background checks; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 1409. A bill to enhance the ability of the Office of the National Ombudsman to assist small businesses in meeting regulatory requirements and develop outreach initiatives to promote awareness of the services the Office of the National Ombudsman provides, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KING, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. REED):

S. 1410. A bill to amend the Federal share of the fishing safety standards grants; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1411. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to require certain disclosures related to amicus activities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 1412. A bill to authorize veterans service organizations to solicit donations at post offices before and after Federal holidays; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1413. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to establish an initiative on improving the capacity of military criminal investigative organizations to prevent child sexual exploitation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 1414. A bill to provide bankruptcy relief for student borrowers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. TILLIS, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 1415. A bill to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to immediately release certain grant funds awarded for mitigation activities under the Community Development Block Grant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1416. A bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to prohibit anticompetitive behaviors by drug product manufacturers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WICKER:

S. 1417. A bill to reauthorize activities of the Maritime Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 1418. A bill to establish the Strength in Diversity Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

## SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. Res. 198. A resolution condemning Brunei's dramatic human rights backsliding; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW):

S. Res. 199. A resolution honoring the life and legacy of Judge Damon Jerome Keith; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. Res. 200. A resolution authorizing the taking of a photograph in the Senate Chamber; considered and agreed to.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 63

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 63, a bill to implement the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform.

S. 151

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 151, a bill to deter criminal robocall violations and improve enforcement of section 227(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, and for other purposes.

S. 191

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 191, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to include in periodic health assessments, separation history and physical examinations, and other assessments an evaluation of whether a member of the Armed Forces has been exposed to open burn pits or toxic airborne chemicals, and for other purposes.

S. 203

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 203, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit, and for other purposes.

S. 257

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 257, a bill to provide for rental assistance for homeless or at-risk Indian veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 277

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 277, a bill to posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Fred Korematsu, in recognition of his dedication to justice and equality.

S. 286

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 286, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 289

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 289, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to support rural residency training funding that is equitable for all States, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 289, supra.

S. 383

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 383, a bill to support carbon dioxide utilization and direct air capture research, to facilitate the permitting and development of carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration projects and carbon dioxide pipelines, and for other purposes.

S. 386

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the per-country numerical limitation for employment-based immigrants, to increase the per-country numerical limitation for family-sponsored immigrants, and for other purposes.

S. 434

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 434, a bill to provide for a report on the maintenance of Federal land holdings under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior.

S. 510

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 510, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for certain requirements relating to charges for internet, television, and voice services, and for other purposes.

S. 518

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 518, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 546

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 546, a bill to extend authorization for the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund of 2001 through fiscal year 2090, and for other purposes.

S. 560

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) were added as cosponsors of S. 560, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans provide coverage for treatment of a congenital anomaly or birth defect.

S. 569

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of S. 569, a bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations relating to commercial motor vehicle drivers under the age of 21, and for other purposes.

S. 670

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 670, a bill to make daylight savings time permanent, and for other purposes.

S. 743

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 743, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the soldiers of the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), commonly known as "Merrill's Marauders", in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service in the jungles of Burma during World War II.

S. 867

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 867, a bill to protect students of institutions of higher education and the taxpayer investment in institutions of higher education by improving oversight and accountability of institutions of higher education, particularly for-profit colleges, improving protections for students and borrowers, and ensuring the integrity of postsecondary education programs, and for other purposes.

S. 880

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 880, a bill to provide outreach and reporting on comprehensive Alzheimer's disease care planning services furnished under the Medicare program.



S. 916

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 916, a bill to improve Federal efforts with respect to the prevention of maternal mortality, and for other purposes.

S. 966

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 966, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modernize the physician self-referral prohibitions to promote care coordination in the merit-based incentive payment system and to facilitate physician practice participation in alternative payment models under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1004

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1004, a bill to increase the number of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operations officers and support staff and to require reports that identify staffing, infrastructure, and equipment needed to enhance security at ports of entry.

S. 1044

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1044, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign traffickers of illicit opioids, and for other purposes.

S. 1081

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1081, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 1126

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1126, a bill to provide better care for Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and their caregivers, while accelerating progress toward prevention strategies, disease modifying treatments, and, ultimately, a cure.

S. 1163

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1163, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an exclusion for assistance provided to participants in certain veterinary student loan repayment or forgiveness programs.

S. 1223

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi

(Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1223, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the non-application of Medicare competitive acquisition rates to complex rehabilitative wheelchairs and accessories.

S. 1231

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1231, a bill to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program.

S. 1317

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1317, a bill to facilitate the availability, development, and environmentally responsible production of domestic resources to meet national material or critical mineral needs, and for other purposes.

S. 1326

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1326, a bill to amend the Animal Health Protection Act to establish a grant program for research on chronic wasting disease, and for other purposes.

S. 1354

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1354, a bill to require certain protections for student loan borrowers, and for other purposes.

S. 1370

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1370, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain military survivor benefits as earned income for purposes of the kiddie tax.

S. RES. 120

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 120, a resolution opposing efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel and the Global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement targeting Israel.

S. RES. 176

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 176, a resolution condemning the terrorist attacks on Christian worshippers in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019, and standing with the Government of Sri Lanka to encourage the protection and preservation of religious liberties.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 1412. A bill to authorize veterans service organizations to solicit dona-

tions at post offices before and after Federal holidays; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1412

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Restoring Access, Improving Service to Enable Veterans Engaging To Fundraise Act of 2019" or the "RAISE VET FUND Act".

#### SEC. 2. SOLICITATION BY VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AT POST OFFICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 404 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) SOLICITATION BY VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AT POST OFFICES.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘business day’ means a day on which a post office is open;

“(B) the term ‘Federal holiday’ means—

“(i) a legal public holiday under section 6103(a) of title 5; and

“(ii) Flag Day, as designated under section 110 of title 36;

“(C) the term ‘holiday period’ means the period beginning 2 business days before, and ending 2 business days after, a Federal holiday; and

“(D) the term ‘veterans service organization’ means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION.—The Postal Service shall permit a veterans service organization to solicit donations by distributing items that are symbols for veterans at a post office on any business day during a holiday period.”

(b) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the United States Postal Service shall promulgate regulations governing the use of post offices by veterans service organizations, including with respect to scheduling, under subsection (f) of section 404 of title 39, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (f) of section 404 of title 39, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date that is 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 1414. A bill to provide bankruptcy relief for student borrowers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1414

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*



**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Student Borrower Bankruptcy Relief Act of 2019”.

**SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS.**

(a) **EXCEPTION TO DISCHARGE.**—Section 523 of title 11, United States Code, is amended in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (8).

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1328(a)(2) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by striking “(8).”.

**SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICATION OF AMENDMENTS.**

(a) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Except as provided in subsection (b), this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) **APPLICATION OF AMENDMENTS.**—The amendments made by this Act shall apply only with respect to cases commenced under title 11, United States Code, on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

---

## SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

---

### SENATE RESOLUTION 198—CON-DEMNING BRUNEI’S DRAMATIC HUMAN RIGHTS BACKSLIDING

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 198

Whereas Brunei has been led since 1967 by one of the world’s longest-reigning absolute monarchs, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah;

Whereas Brunei gained independence in 1984;

Whereas emergency powers in place in Brunei since 1962 allow the sultan to govern with few limitations to his authority;

Whereas, according to the United States Department of State Brunei 2018 Human Rights Report, human rights issues included censorship, interferences with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, crimes involving violence or threats targeting homosexuality, and exploitation of foreign workers, including through forced labor;

Whereas Brunei’s media are neither free nor diverse, with broadcasting dominated by the state and private media owned or controlled by the royal family;

Whereas homosexuality has been illegal in Brunei, carrying a punishment of up to ten years in prison;

Whereas in 2013, the Government of Brunei announced it was imposing new laws that included harsher punishments of death by stoning for adultery and homosexual relations;

Whereas international condemnation resulted in a delay in carrying out the provisions;

Whereas, in March 2019, the Government of Brunei announced it was going forward with the penal code to take effect April 3, 2019;

Whereas the law includes, among other things, death by stoning for male same-sex relations, adultery, and blasphemy, amputation of limbs for theft, caning for female same-sex relations, and criminalization of exposure of children to the beliefs and practices of differing religions;

Whereas, on April 2, 2019, the Department of State said Brunei’s new laws and associated penalties run “counter to its international human rights obligations including with respect to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”;

Whereas, on April 18, 2019, the European Parliament adopted a resolution strongly

condemning Brunei for introducing “retrograde” laws, calling for their immediate repeal, urging that Brunei uphold its international obligations under “international human rights instruments, including with regard to sexual minorities, religious minorities and non-believers,” and suggesting visa bans and asset freezes should the laws not be repealed;

Whereas the United Nations and international human rights organizations have denounced the laws, arguing they amount to torture and a violation of human rights;

Whereas United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet urged Brunei to repeal the laws, which include punishments she called “cruel, inhuman, and degrading” and a “serious setback for human rights protections.”;

Whereas Human Rights Watch stated, “Brunei’s new penal code is barbaric to the core, imposing archaic punishments for acts that shouldn’t even be crimes. . . . Sultan Hassanal should immediately suspend amputations, stoning, and all other rights-abusing provisions and punishments.”;

Whereas Amnesty International stated, “Brunei’s Penal Code is a deeply flawed piece of legislation containing a range of provisions that violate human rights. . . . As well as imposing cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments, it blatantly restricts the rights to freedom of expression, religion and belief, and codifies discrimination against women and girls.”; and

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has also noted that the implementation of these discriminatory laws will drive people underground and out of reach of life-saving HIV treatment and prevention services, increases stigma, and gives license to discrimination, violence, and harassment: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the Government of Brunei’s further criminalization and barbaric punishments regarding sexual orientation, adultery, and relations between persons of the same sex;

(2) calls on the Government of Brunei to expeditiously repeal such measures; and

(3) supports the withdrawal and denial of United States visas for any Brunei official responsible for passage or implementation of such laws until they are repealed.

### SENATE RESOLUTION 199—HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JUDGE DAMON JEROME KEITH

Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 199

Whereas Judge Damon Keith was born on July 4, 1922, in Detroit, Michigan, and died at his home in Detroit, Michigan, surrounded by family and loved ones, on April 28, 2019;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith received a bachelor of arts from West Virginia State University, a juris doctor from Howard University School of Law, and a master of laws from Wayne State University Law School;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith served in the United States Army from 1943 to 1946, when he was discharged as a sergeant;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith devoted his life to public service and served more than 50 years on the Federal bench, where he was a champion for civil rights and individual liberties for all;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith served as one of the first cochairmen of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission at its inception in 1964,

where he worked to oppose discrimination and enforce equal protection under the law;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith was first nominated to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan in 1967 by President Lyndon Johnson and served as the District Court’s first African American chief judge from 1975 to 1977;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith became the sixth African American to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit when he was nominated by President Jimmy Carter in 1977, and he served as senior judge on the court from May 1, 1995, until his passing;

Whereas, in a 1970 decision, Judge Damon Keith upheld the civil rights of students in Pontiac, Michigan, when he ordered a bus policy and new boundaries for schools in Pontiac, Michigan, in order to end racial segregation;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith defended the protections guaranteed under the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States when he held in *United States v. Sinclair*, 321 F. Supp. 1074 (E.D. Mich. 1971) that the United States Government must obtain a warrant before beginning domestic electronic surveillance, and that landmark decision was unanimously upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States;

Whereas, in *Garrett v. City of Hamtramck*, 394 F. Supp. 1151 (E.D. Mich. 1975), Judge Damon Keith ruled against housing discrimination and ordered the city of Hamtramck, Michigan, to relocate approximately 500 African Americans who had been displaced by federally supported urban renewal projects;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith worked throughout his career to safeguard the civil liberties, civil rights, and voting rights of all people of the United States while opposing housing, employment, and racial discrimination;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith has received more than 40 honorary degrees as well as the Spingarn Medal from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the highest honor awarded by the organization for distinguished achievement, and the Edward J. Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award, the highest award that can be bestowed on a member of the Federal judiciary;

Whereas Judge Damon Keith inspired generations of lawyers that served under him as clerks and influenced the State of Michigan for decades; and

Whereas Judge Damon Keith, who coined the phrase “democracies die behind closed doors”, will be remembered for his dedication to upholding the Constitution of the United States and his commitment to justice: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate honors the life and legacy of Judge Damon Jerome Keith and his dedication to upholding civil rights.

### SENATE RESOLUTION 200—AUTHORIZING THE TAKING OF A PHOTOGRAPH IN THE SENATE CHAMBER

Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 200

*Resolved*, That paragraph 1 of rule IV of the Rules for the Regulation of the Senate Wing of the United States Capitol and Senate Office Buildings (prohibiting the taking of pictures in the Senate Chamber) be temporarily suspended for the sole and specific purpose of permitting the Senate Photographic Studio to photograph the Senate in actual session

on Tuesday, May 14, 2019, at the hour of 2:15 p.m.

SEC. 2. The Sergeant at Arms of the Senate is authorized and directed to make the necessary arrangements therefore, which arrangements shall provide for a minimum of disruption to Senate proceedings.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I have 3 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

##### COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 9, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: David Fabian Black, of North Dakota, to be Deputy Commissioner of Social Security, and Emin Toro, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court.

##### COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 9, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a business meeting on pending legislation and the hearing on the following nominations: Jeffrey Vincent Brown, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas, Robert J. Colville, and Stephanie L. Haines, both to be a United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania, Brantley Starr, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, and Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Attorney General, Timothy J. Downing, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma, William Travis Brown, Jr., to be United States Marshal for the Middle District of Louisiana, and Michael Blaine East, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of North Carolina, all of the Department of Justice.

##### SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 9, 2019, at 2 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JUDGE DAMON JEROME KEITH

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 199, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 199) honoring the life and legacy of Judge Damon Jerome Keith.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 199) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### AUTHORIZING THE TAKING OF A PHOTOGRAPH IN THE SENATE CHAMBER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 200, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 200) authorizing the taking of a photograph in the Senate Chamber.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 200) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 3 p.m., Monday, May 13; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Truncate nomination; finally, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture motions filed during today's session of the Senate ripen at 5:30 p.m., Monday, May 13.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 3:45 p.m., adjourned until Monday, May 13, 2019, at 3 p.m.

#### CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate May 9, 2019:

##### THE JUDICIARY

MICHAEL H. PARK, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT.